Breakthrough and Concealment: The Formulaic Dynamics of Character Behavior in Lucan

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2012

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation analyzes the three main protagonists of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* through their attempts to utilize, resist, or match a pattern of action which I call the "formula." Most evident in Caesar, the formula is a cycle of alternating states of energy that allows him to gain a decisive edge over his opponents by granting him the ability of perpetual regeneration. However, a similar dynamic is also found in rivers, which thus prove to be formidable adversaries of Caesar in their own right. Although neither Pompey nor Cato is able to draw on the Caesarian formula successfully, Lucan eventually associates them with the river-derived variant, thus granting them a measure of resistance (if only in the non-physical realm). By tracing the development of the formula throughout the epic, the dissertation provides a deeper understanding of the importance of natural forces in Lucan's poem as well as the presence of an underlying drive that unites its fractured world.

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Acknowledgments

The following dissertation could not have taken on its final shape without the valuable contributions of several individuals. First, I would like to thank all the members of my committee for their assistance. Above all, I owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to my sponsor Gareth Williams for his interest in my initial ideas, his inexhaustible supply of suggestions, and his tireless encouragement in helping me see the project through to its conclusion. Many thanks as well to Kristina Milnor and Katharina Volk for helpful comments on both earlier drafts and the final text. In addition, the other members of my committee, Joseph Howley and James Uden, offered insightful and pointed feedback. As for my peers, Jenn Thomas deserves mention here for reading through earlier material and providing witty and trenchant criticism; I also thank her and Angeline Chiu for general advice about the whole process and for reminding me to keep things in perspective. Special thanks to Jason Gajderowicz for his timely responses to queries in the latter stages of the project. Finally, without the constant love, support, and advice of my parents, I would not be where or who am I today.

Introduction

1. Current Perspectives on Lucan

Lucan has certainly not lacked his share of admirers and interpreters in recent times. Relegated to second-class status among Latin poets for much of the twentieth century, his reputation has experienced a remarkable resurgence in the past few decades. The result has been a rich harvest of studies, and there seem to be no signs that scholarly production is slowing. Last year, Lucan finally received a *Brill's Companion* volume, as sure an indication as any that the position of *Bellum Civile* in critical estimation is secure.[1] As for a wider appreciation for the poem, less than two months ago at the time of this writing, a new English translation published by Penguin Classics came out in print, which is hopefully a sign of Lucan's growing popularity beyond the field of classics alone.[2]

During this renaissance of Lucan studies, many facets of the epic have been explored, and the *Bellum Civile* has been revealed to be a complex, multifaceted, always-engaging yet ultimately irreducible masterpiece. There are still many aspects of the poem that remain unexplored, however, and the present study is a contribution along these lines. To clarify, it is not chiefly concerned with the moral, ethical or political aspects of the poem, which have been intensely and at times even acrimoniously debated. As is well known among students of Lucan, the arguments fall roughly into two camps. At one end lies a unitary conception of Lucan's epic, in which all the pessimism, black humor, and grotesqueness that he displays with such abandon and inventiveness are either

[1] Asso (2011).

[2] Fox and Adams (2012).

relegated to the status of temporary moods, so that the whole work is subsumed into a sort of Stoic sermon: Emanuele Narducci was perhaps the most eloquent contemporary spokesman of this view, which holds that, despite the horror and *nefas* of civil war, there is ultimately a moral center at work in the poem and that it eventually wins out in the person of Cato.[3] At the other end is a "deconstructionist" spirit arguing that there can be no meaning in a world riven by civil war: this view, whose chief proponents are Henderson and Masters, rejects the significance of Cato, seeing instead Caesar's destructive will to power as the true animating spirit of the epic.[4]

There have been attempts at reconciliation: Leigh (1997) is mostly traditional in drawing a line between politically engaged viewing and that which is disinterested and thus benefits the new Caesarian order, but he takes a more or less deconstructionist line on Cato, while Bartsch takes something of an inverse viewpoint, detailing the slippage of all ethical categories and boundaries in the poem but also proclaiming that the narrator's voice rises above the chaos of civil war and creates a value system by sheer force of will.[5] More recently, D'Alessandro Behr argues that the narrator's frequent apostrophes are designed to guide the reader to the "proper" conclusion, namely that Cato is the moral center of the poem, thus reinforcing the traditional viewpoint on Lucan.[6] I find myself more in sympathy with the deconstructionist point of view, which favors Caesar as the

[3] Narducci (1979) and (2002); note his critical attitude of the deconstructionist stance in the latter and in Narducci (1999).

[4] Henderson (1987) and Masters (1992).

[5] Bartsch (1997).

[6] D'Alessandro Behr (2007).

driving force of the poem.[7] This informs my decision to focus on a pattern of behavior that is successfully exhibited only by Caesar. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the narrative voice favors Pompey and Cato, and increasingly so as the epic proceeds.[8] That this is the case is shown by the frequency of apostrophes to them in Books 7-9, namely during and after the Battle of Pharsalus, at Pompey's death, and during Cato's Libyan march. Neglecting this aspect of the epic is perhaps the greatest blind spot for studies of a deconstructionist bent. Even if one concludes that both Pompey's *umbra* and Cato can provide no real counterweight to Caesar, to disregard them is, in a sense, to do away with the emotional heart of the epic. Related to this is the relative neglect of Book 10, in which Caesar exhibits clear signs of weakness and almost succumbs to a plot on his life: as the narrative voice grows stronger, Caesar's previously unstoppable force diminishes.[9] In short, both pro- and anti-Caesarian perspectives need to be considered if one is to do full justice to Lucan's poem.

2. Summary of Chapters

One facet of the epic, however, needs greater scrutiny: Lucan's fascination with nature, especially its violent side. In a poem about civil war and the resulting devastation, it is no wonder that Lucan would not be attracted to scenes of nature in harmony or at peace, but rather to phenomena such as floods, sandstorms, and heavenly fire. However, by and large there are few studies in which Lucan's conception of the

[7] For this viewpoint, see Masters (1992) 7-8.

[8] Throughout this study, I designate these first-person interventions as the "narrator." Marti (1975) offers the most detailed theory on Lucan narrative voice(s) thus far, though the subject could benefit from further study.

[9] Besides specific studies on the Nile episode (see Chapter 4), coverage of the rest of the tenth book is still relatively sparse; Rossi (2005) is a recent contribution.

natural world is the main focus.[10] As for the relationship of nature to the main characters, it is widely acknowledged that Lucan depicts Caesar as a force of nature, a description immediately evident when Lucan compares him to a lightning bolt in Book 1.[11] The present study thus takes its origin from verbal clues that Caesar behaves according to a pattern analogous to natural processes, which I call the "formula" (not to be confused with the term as used in Homeric studies). Briefly put, the formula is a cycle of gathering strength or energy, followed by its destructive release against a barrier or enemy, which is then followed by a period of exhaustion and inactivity in preparation for regeneration and another turn of the cycle. We are thus meant to understand Caesar as "superhuman" in his relentlessness and remarkable ability to rebound from disaster time and again. The objective of the first chapter is to explicate this process in detail and then to trace its occurrence in three figures who exhibit similar characteristics: Marius, Antaeus, and Scaeva. I begin with subsidiary characters instead of Caesar himself, because it is in them that Lucan introduces the most perfect (i.e. cyclical) examples of the formula.

After the groundwork for the formula is established through its appearance in minor figures, the next two chapters are devoted to its operation in Caesar himself. Chapter 2 covers the first five books of the epic, which by themselves form a large-scale half-cycle of energy recharge and release in Books 1 to 3 and a period of relative danger in Book 5, when Caesar is confronted by an army that mutinies in part because of its exhaustion. In addition, the indebtedness of the formula to natural processes is clarified

[10] This topic has lately received more attention: see Loupiac (1998), Schrijvers (2005) and especially Landolfi and Monella (2007).

[11] See Newmyer (1983) and Rosner-Siegel (1983).

because Caesar is shown to draw upon a dynamic of flooding and overflowing that is based on the behavior of rivers.

In Chapter 3, the large-scale formulaic arc begins to rise until it reaches its climax with Caesar's victory at Pharsalus. After an absence of nearly two full books, he reappears in Book 9 on the down side of this arc. With Pompey's defeat and death, Caesar faces no credible opposition for the time being; thus weakened, he indulges himself by visiting Troy and Egypt. At Alexandria, Cleopatra's seduction and the court's luxury weaken him still further, allowing a conspiracy to be hatched against his life. This sudden danger forces Caesar to revive somewhat, but not before he is thrust into the greatest personal danger he faces in the epic. The abrupt end of the poem at this point raises perplexing issues for the formula, especially as to whether its cycle has been decisively broken, considering that the last image of Book 10 is the clash between Scaeva and Pompey at Dyrrhachium, a rare moment in which both sides were equally formulaic. Even if Lucan did not deliberately end the epic at this point, it still breaks off in a sort of stasis as the two sides are permanently frozen in the clash of civil war.

On this note of Caesar's near-defeat, the next three chapters examine ways in which Caesar's opponents (both human and non-human) attempt either to resist the formula or appropriate it for themselves in their resistance to Caesar. Chapter 4 examines Lucan's portrayal of water, especially rivers, as Caesar's persistent adversary throughout the epic, a role they can perform because of their ability to overflow and flood. The main flaw in unleashing aquatic power against Caesar, however, is that it threatens to engulf the world in a catastrophe no less than that which would result from Caesar's victory. Consequently, rivers can only defeat him after he departs from physical conquest and

takes up mental conquest by inquiring after the source of the Nile, whose *caput* can be seen as a replacement or continuation of Pompey's. Book 10 thus shows that Caesar still exhibits aggression underneath the luxurious influences of the court, but that he has transferred it to the intellectual plane. Acoreus, however, is able to dodge Caesar's request in a myriad of competing theories as well as to unleash the full force of the Nile's flood in the final section of his speech. Thus, Caesar is finally vanquished by a river, though only in words.

Rivers also play an important role in Chapter 5, which is centered on Pompey. Being a more fully human character than either Caesar or Cato, Pompey is beset by opposing desires. He is not immune to the pull of the formula: Pompey's longing for past glory is essentially a desire to return to the condition of his youthful strength. His continual attempts to do so throughout the epic prove to be a failure, with the singular exception of the campaign at Dyrrhachium, in which he gains the upper hand over Caesar through a temporary outburst of energy. However, Pompey is more often associated with *fuga*, a scattering of his troops (and thus his force or energy) that is not balanced by their regeneration. He tries to frame this escape to the margins of the world in formulaic terms by stating his intention to draw on the resources of his eastern client kingdoms as a prelude to a return to Rome, but this plan instead ultimately leads to his own death.

In addition, Pompey is also vulnerable to a condition that besets the victims of Caesarian conquest: an instinct to hide in the face of Caesar's domination. For those vanquished by Caesar, the idea of hiding is manifested in external silence and internal complaint. For Pompey, hiding is embodied in Cornelia, who serves as a refuge to which he will flee after his defeat at Pharsalus. Yet the old pull of *fama* still lures him, and he is

thus not content to remain in permanent obscurity. In order to revive his fortunes, Pompey seeks help from the Parthians in the manner of his earlier dispatches to the east. Yet enlisting this people crosses a moral boundary for Lentulus (representing the republican viewpoint on this issue), and it would have resulted in Pompey's regeneration as a full-blown barbarized despot. He would truly have been able to master the formula then, but at the cost of serving as a focus for the narrator's hopes of resistance after his death.

Pompey's assassination thus comes at a most opportune time for his reputation. Even before the narrator utilizes his memory for his own ends, at the moment of his death Pompey already transforms the hiding motif from a mark of shame and subjection into a quiet confidence in the durability of his *fama*. Through this process, he assimilates the state of hiding to the dormant phase of the formula, which awaits posthumous reactivation by the narrative voice. This comes in the eulogy to Book 8, when all the strands of Pompey's life as depicted by Lucan are united. In death, his *umbra* is finally able to overflow and flood like a river, the natural force that has been Caesar's consistent adversary as well as one whose power has been indirectly associated with Pompey throughout the epic. Instead of harnessing rivers in life, Pompey now behaves like one in death. But his permeation of the world is necessarily spiritual, since Caesar has already "flooded" the physical world. And so like the Nile's victory, that of Pompey's *umbra* is dependent on the spoken word.

Yet such a victory is not without its benefits, as the last chapter shows. At first glance, Cato would seem to have nothing to do with the formula, since it is the essence of dynamism and regeneration, while from his first appearance in Book 2 he is associated

with shadows and death. Such a connection with *umbrae*, however, also makes him the ideal candidate to receive Pompey's *umbra*, which he does in Book 9. As one of the leaders of the republican remnants after Pharsalus, he also inherits Pompey's mode of *fuga*, which is now more necessary than ever. His march through Libya is a sort of escape, though Cato views it in Stoic and republican terms such that for him, a moral or spiritual goal is paramount instead of a concrete, physical goal. In this sense, Cato touches on formulaic themes of regeneration. Yet the only unambiguous formulaic connection he finds in the desert is his vision of an omnipresent Jupiter as opposed to the hiddenness of Jupiter Ammon, whom he rejects. The vision of this Jupiter he presents is virtually identical to the all-pervading nature of Pompey's *umbra*: this important connection is reminiscent of his self-identification in Book 2 with the *umbra* of *Libertas*, though the term is now charged with triumph and optimism instead of pessimism and death. Yet Cato's connection to Pompeian overflow also means that he is unable to partake of the formula in its truly regenerative, Caesarian sense. Moreover, the desert itself perverts the formula, for Lucan depicts the Libyan snakes as creating grotesque Caesarian parodies out of Cato's men. The conclusion of Cato's journey shows that the desert cannot be conquered by Stoic training alone, as only the Psylli's natural immunity to venom ensures the survival of the army.

In a way, Pompey and Cato both struggle to capture a kind of Caesarian dynamism for themselves, since it is the only force in a universe gone awry that promises regeneration. Both succeed in this aspiration, however, only when their cause is effectively finished. The ultimate question that the poem puts to us, then, is whether such

success in the realm of *fama* and *nomen* is enough to outweigh Caesar's physical domination in Lucan's world.

Chapter 1. The Caesarian Formula

1. The Introduction of the Formula

The Basic Formula: Its Cyclical Nature

The first book of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* begins with a massive proem of 182 lines, in which the poet expounds in a variety of ways on the causes of the civil war. Included in this multi-part structure are character sketches of Pompey and Caesar, each accompanied by a simile.[1] The poet describes Caesar thus:

> *Sed non in Caesare tantum*
> *nomen erat nec fama ducis, sed nescia virtus*
> *stare loco, solusque pudor non vincere bello.*
> *acer et indomitus, quo spes quoque ira vocasset,*
> *ferre manum et numquam temerando parcere ferro,*
> *successus urguere suos, instare favori*
> *numinis, impellens quidquid sibi summa petenti*
> *obstaret gaudensque viam fecisse ruina,*
> *qualiter expressum ventis per nubila fulmen*
> *aetheris impulsi sonitu mundique fragore*
> *emicuit rupitque diem populosque paventes*
> *terruit obliqua praestringens lumina flamma:*
> *in sua templa furit, nullaque exire vetante*
> *materia magnamque cadens magnamque revertens*
> *dat stragem late sparsosque recolligit ignes*.[2] (1.143-57)
>
> Not only did Caesar have a great name and a general's reputation, but a force that could not stay still; his only shame was not to be victorious in war. Fierce and untamed, acting wherever his hope or rage called him and never refraining from polluting his sword, pursuing his own success, pushing hard on the deity's favor, repelling whatever blocks his aiming for the heights and rejoicing at creating a path through destruction, just as lightning, squeezed out through clouds by the winds, leaps forth and breaks the sky with a sound of the shattered heavens and crashing of the

[1] Newmyer (1983) and Rosner-Siegel (1983) analyze these two similes and the continuation of their motifs in the rest of the epic. On p.166, Rosner-Siegel notes the rarity of paired similes in epic.

[2] The text of Lucan used here is the 1997 reprint of Shackleton Bailey's Teubner edition.

> universe and terrifies the frightened peoples, blinding their eyes with slanted fire: it rages against its own temples and, with no substance preventing its course, wreaks widespread havoc both returning and falling as it again gathers its scattered fires.

Lucan compares Caesar to an entity of complete destruction; he is, as Ahl says, "energy incarnate."[3] What concerns us, however, is the nature of the correspondence between description and simile. Even though the presence of a lightning simile is a rarity in Latin epic, the first five lines of the simile are of no particular difficulty, describing the usual destruction resulting from a lightning strike.[4] However, scholars seem to have missed the most peculiar feature: the last two lines find no equivalent in the character sketch. Caesar's aggressive nature is mirrored in the lightning bolt's destructive force and his elation at destroying obstacles in his path finds a match in *nullaque exire vetante / materia*, but there is nothing in Lucan's description that corresponds to either the shattering of the bolt or its reconstitution and return into the sky. What, then, could be the point of this appendage?

There is in general a more scientific cast to Lucan's simile than other epic similes involving lightning, and the lightning bolt's return to the region whence it came is the most notable example of his attention to such details.[5] However, what is truly innovative is Lucan's combination of return (*revertens*) with a re-coalescing (*recolligit*) of the lightning's scattered flames (*sparsos*). We may thus conclude that withdrawal back into

[3] Ahl (1976) 198. For Caesar as a force of nature, see also Newmyer (1983) 230 and Johnson (1987) 74.

[4] Dilke (1972) 65 n.13 remarks on the absence of lightning similes in Latin epic before Lucan; Miura (1981) 213 points to *Aen*. 8.391-92, but this is hardly much of a simile, and moreover it refers to Vulcan's love for Venus, a theme foreign to Lucan's concerns here. Hershkowitz (1998) 223-24 sees a twisting of the positive association of Roman generals with lightning (quoting Lucretius 3.1034 and *Aen*. 6.842-43, both of which describe the Scipios as *fulmina belli*).

[5] Roche (2009) 194 points out parallels at Seneca *Ep*. 57.8 and *NQ* 2.40.2-3; Lucan seems to be combining the returning properties of Seneca's first type of lightning and the widely destructive nature of the second type.

its source is even necessary for a full reassembly of the lightning bolt, perhaps as a prelude to a future attack.

If we turn to the next simile describing Caesar, which compares him to a Libyan lion, a common feature begins to emerge:

> *…sicut squalentibus arvis*
> *aestiferae Libyes viso leo comminus hoste*
> *subsedit dubius, totam dum colligit iram.*
> *mox, ubi se saevae stimulavit verbere caudae*
> *erexitque iubam et vasto grave murmur hiatu*
> *infremuit, tum torta levis si lancea Mauri*
> *haereat aut latum subeant venabula pectus,*
> *per ferrum tanti securus vulneris exit.* (1.205-12)
>
> …just as on the parched fields of heat-bringing Libya the lion, when he sees his enemy close at hand, crouches in hesitation while he gathers his rage. Soon, after he has goaded himself with his savage tail's whip, reared his mane and bellowed a heavy rumbling with his gaping maw, if the light and twisted lance of a Moor should cling to him or hunting-spears find their way into his broad chest, heedless of such wounds he passes through the steel.

The occasion for this simile is Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon, and thus the breaching of the final barrier between legality and civil war. The entire simile has manifold implications, but here it is line 1.207 that is of importance due to *colligit*, which shares the same root as *recolligit* in the previous simile.[6] Now one might be inclined to write this off as a coincidence, especially considering Lucan's fondness for word repetition.[7] However, the sense of *colligit* as charging up energy is informed by *recolligit* in the bolt

[6] For the influence of *Aen*. 12.4-9 on Lucan's simile, see Getty (1940) 56, Thompson and Bruère (1968) 8, Ahl (1976) 105, Lebek (1976) 120-21, and Lausberg (1985) 1584. Thompson and Bruère and Miura (1981) 216 note that the difference between the two similes is that Turnus' lion is stirred to action because of his wounds, whereas Lucan transfers the wounding to the end of the simile. This change is small but decisive, for it makes the formula and its ambiguous aftermath possible. In addition, it is no accident that the lion is Libyan, given the mysterious recharging properties of the African landscape and thus its affinity with Caesarian figures.

[7] A feature of his style noted as far back as Postgate (1907) 219; Mayer (1981) 12-13 criticizes this tendency. For a more favorable evaluation, see Asso (2010) 18-24.

simile: we may thus conclude that the lightning bolt's re-gathering of its scattered flames entails its regeneration in preparation for another attack. Moreover, these two similes form halves that can be combined into a whole: the lion signifies movement from weakness to strength, while the lightning then takes that strength and unleashes it, destroying itself in the process, and then recombines itself after having collected its own fragments and withdrawn into the safety of hiding. In other words, what we have here is a cycle, with the lion and the lightning at different stages of this process. Through the subtle tool of the simile, Lucan is suggesting that there is an underlying pattern or formula to Caesar's behavior. If Caesar can really behave cyclically, or in other words, act like a force of nature, the consequences would be profound, because he would then be in effect invulnerable. Of course he is not literally immortal, but Caesar is, to be sure, the only vital force in the epic and has a remarkable ability to rebound from personal danger. In a way, the formula serves as an ideal for Caesar to match at each new trial he undergoes in the course of the poem.

Lest the idea of formulaic, predictable behavior seem overly reductive, here is Caesar's own view on the matter:

> *ventus ut amittit vires, nisi robore densae*
> *occurrunt silvae, spatio diffusus inani,*
> *utque perit magnus nullis obstantibus ignis,*
> *sic hostes mihi desse nocet, damnumque putamus*
> *armorum, nisi qui vinci potuere rebellant*. (3.362-66)
>
> …just as the wind loses strength as it dissipates in empty space unless dense forests block it with their strength, and just as a mighty fire perishes when nothing obstructs it, thus the absence of enemies damages me, and we think it a loss of fighting if those who could be conquered do not rebel.

By announcing that he must encounter and destroy obstacles, Caesar adds an additional factor to the operation of the cycle: its continuation, and thus the very survival of

Caesar's destructive power, depends upon the existence of enemies. If there are none to be found, all the energy which he has accumulated through regeneration will then dissipate into nothing (*spatio diffusus inani*). Thus, the formula is not automatically self-perpetuating, but actually depends on an object against which Caesar must apply his force.

This need for an obstacle was also a factor in the previous two similes, though only hinted at: no *materia* could stop the lightning bolt from its destructive path, and the unnamed hunters served as the "obstacle" goading the lion into gathering energy. However, the lion simile also shows further development: the obstacle it actually faces in the end—the spear—is not passive, but an equal and opposing force that may prove injurious, if not outright fatal.[8] The significance of such an outcome will be considered in the next section.

Taking all three similes into account, we can now add to our previous picture of the cycle the stipulation that the cycle itself will not continue indefinitely if Caesar does not encounter an enemy; instead, the built-up energy will be wasted. In effect, the presence of an opponent or barrier has two uses: the first is to induce regeneration, and the second is to cause its release as a destructive force. The absence of an opponent would thus induce Caesar either to remain weak and diffuse or to become so over time. This need for an adversary, then, is a potential weakness in the hitherto apparently ironclad determinism of the formula; although the constant presence of opponents ensures that Caesar has no need to be concerned for the majority of the epic, it will start to affect him after his victory at Pharsalus.

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[8] Ahl (1976) 106 n.41 notices the similarity of the two "obstacles," though not the crucial difference between them.

At this point it would help to consider the larger picture—how, if at all, the formula gleaned from these similes relates to Caesar's behavior in the main body of the epic. Could Lucan really have intended to schematize Caesar so rigidly that he behaves in a wholly predictable fashion? Notwithstanding Lucan's tendency to depict him in superhuman, hyperbolic terms, Caesar is of course still mortal.[9] What is needed, then, is an examination of the Caesarian cycle throughout the epic and a disclosure of the means by which Lucan transforms Caesar from a human (if supremely dominant) figure into a force of cosmic destruction, as well as the symbolic implications of such a portrayal.

This is where verbs such as *spargere, (re)colligere*, and *diffudere* become significant, for they serve as signposts demarcating the various phases of the formula, thus allowing Lucan to express the state of Caesarian "matter" at that particular moment—that is, whether it is scattered (*sparsus, diffusus*) because Caesar has just achieved a breakthrough or whether it is in the process of reforming itself (*colligere*) in preparation for another outburst. They thus effectively act as leitmotifs that bind the epic on a level below its episodic surface.[10] In general, the dormant phase and the regeneration which it enables are signaled by words denoting compression, gathering or regeneration, the breakthrough itself is signaled by words of violent destruction (often accompanied by *furor* or *ira*), and the resulting shift back to dormancy is signaled by words that express scattering, dispersal, and exhaustion. We will also see that as Lucan develops and modifies the formula or its separate phases, additional formulaic words will

[9] Ahl (1976) 191.

[10] This is a central aspect of Lucan's compositional technique that needs further elaboration: besides Rosner-Siegel (n.1) and Newmyer (n.1), who only use images from the Book 1 character-sketch similes, only Schönberger (1960) and Dinter (2005) focus on networks of motifs that are active throughout the poem.

enter the picture, chiefly those that are concerned with, on the one hand, concealment, and on the other hand, spreading or overflow.

Breaking the Formula? Weaknesses in the Cycle

As always with Lucan, things are not as straightforward as they seem. The similes contain hints that the cycle may be interrupted, thus rendering Caesar's breakthroughs suicidal.[11] Such an outcome is clearest in the lion simile, which ends with the beast literally passing through a javelin: *per ferrum tanti securus vulneris exit* (1.212). Given that the wound is located in the chest area (*latum subeant venabula pectus*, 1.211), it is at the very least mortal. In addition, the image of two opposed forces meeting each other's thrust is thematically linked to the opening lines of the epic: *pila minantia pilis* ("spears threatening spears," 1.7). There, these equally mirrored forces symbolized the suicide of the state in civil war. Thus, in the lion simile Lucan combines Caesarian aggression with the motif of mutual suicide.[12] He imagines a situation in which Caesar will encounter not a passive, immobile obstacle, but a force just as lethal and thrusting as he is and which consequently may kill him even if he succeeds in overcoming it (*exit*, a subject-object inversion instead of the expected javelin passing through the lion).[13] At the very moment when Caesar initiates the civil war by assaulting Rome, Lucan is

[11] Cf. *De Ira*, in which Seneca describes the inherent death-wish of the *iratus*: *dum alteri noceat sui neglegens, in ipsa inruens tela et ultionis secum ultorem tracturae avidus* ("while, heedless of himself, he harms another, hurtling into the very missiles and greedy for a revenge that would carry off the avenger with it," 1.1).

[12] Masters (1992) 2 n.5, who points out that previous commentators have failed to notice this crucial aspect of the simile; see also Leigh (1997) 217-18.

[13] Yet at the same time, *securus* also raises doubts about the fatal nature of the wound. One may argue that this adjective expresses Caesar's heedlessness for his own safety, but it also raises the possibility (however faint) that he is confident because he knows he will survive. The issue of Caesar's survival will come up again in the Scaeva episode and, of course, at the end of Book 10.

already picturing his demise. The lion simile thus suggests a fate for Caesar opposed to that suggested by the bolt simile (this use of the simile as suggesting various outcomes that may or may not come to fruition will also be operative in the case of Pompey, as will be seen).

Even the bolt simile contains a potentially troubling image: the lightning *in sua templa furit* (1.155). Scholars differ over what *templa* means here, whether it designates a sacred area of the sky designated for augury (*OLD* 1) or an actual temple; both definitions have their merits as well as their drawbacks, though given the absence of the Olympian deities from Lucan's poem, however, the latter sense makes a much greater impact in its image of Caesar usurping Jupiter's position rather than the purely naturalistic image implied by the former rendering.[14] However, the issue is not so much the definition of *templa* as the fact that it is *sua*: the image clearly recalls the suicidal republic with which Lucan opens Book 1: *in sua victrici conversum viscera dextra* ("turned against its own guts with a victorious hand," 1.3).[15] Still, given that the simile ends on a note of withdrawal and presumed recuperation, the cycle remains unbroken.

Finally, the Book 3 simile also contains a possible breaking of the cycle: instead of a glorious suicide implied in the other two similes, it suggests death from exhaustion or dissipation. As Caesarian force thrives on conflict, victory and peace would cause a

[14] The first sense seems to be predominant: Getty (1940) 50 follows Haskins (1887) 11 here. However, Hardie (1993) 62 assumes "temples," and Nix (2008) argues that it specifically refers to the temples of Jupiter here and thus that Caesar has assimilated himself to Jupiter. *Templa* cannot mean "precincts" here, since *cadens* does not describe a flash between clouds, and also, as in Nix (2008) 283 n.10, the *stragem* in 1.157 must mean physical damage. Still, rendering *templa* as "temples" is not unproblematic, since the word cannot be read on a literal level (i.e. Jupiter must stand in for the bolt), thus necessitating an argument of the sort that Nix provides. Lucan is perhaps being too impressionistic here, but this is the cost of producing such a striking image.

[15] Masters (1992) 2 n.5. In addition, *victrici* is ambiguous here: on the surface it designates the republic as victorious in foreign conquests, but perhaps it may also be read as referring to Caesar's victory in civil war. This idea of "Caesar as Rome" means that it is not just the republic that loses, but also himself; he thus wins and loses at the same time.

seeping away of energy. Now before Pharsalus, Caesar has precious little time or opportunity to worry about decline due to the constant presence of opposition. However, after this climactic battle, the danger of fading away will gradually loom larger until he finds himself alone and surrounded on an island in the final lines of Book 10, unable to recharge.[16] Clearly, how and why he and the formula find themselves in this situation will need to be considered carefully.

The Formula in Context: Influences and Parallels

Such a mechanistic breakdown of an epic character's behavior is an innovation on Lucan's part, but there are parallels for a cycle of decline and regeneration in other ancient authors. An early analogue may be Euripides' conception of madness, especially in his *Heracles*. There, the titular hero undergoes bouts of insanity that require a period of rest and deep sleep afterwards (εὕδει δ' ὁ τλήμων ὕπνον οὐκ εὐδαίμονα*,* "the wretched one sleeps a miserable sleep," 1013); Euripides thus describes a transition from frenzied activity to complete inertia as a means of recuperation. Of course, the crucial difference in Heracles' case is that the prolonged rest returns him to sanity instead of serving as the springboard for another round of destructive behavior.

Moving closer to Lucan's own time, Vergil in the *Georgics* describes a snake in terms that foreshadow the formula: *cum positis novus exuviis nitidusque iuventa / volvitur* ("when with cast-off slough, it glides fresh and gleaming with youth," 3.437-38). The ability of the snake to grow a new skin and shed its old one corresponds to a renewed vigor or virtually a rebirth. The same holds for Pyrrhus in Book 2 of the *Aeneid*, whose

[16] In conventional terms, this may be seen as Fortune's desertion of her former favorite; see Dick (1967) 237-38.

assault on the inner chamber of Priam's palace is also compared to a snake (2.471-75). Vergil actually transfers this simile from the *Georgics* passage just quoted; in this case Pyrrhus, as the son of Achilles, is literally his father "reborn." However, we are still missing the idea of a complete cycle from outburst to dormancy present in the bolt simile, as well as the fact that regeneration is induced by the presence of an obstacle or opponent.

It is only when we come to Seneca that we find a true parallel:[17]

> *Marcet sine adversario virtus; tunc apparet quanta sit quantumque polleat, cum quid possit patientia ostendit*. (*De Prov.* 2.4)
>
> Virtue languishes without an opponent: when endurance demonstrates what it is capable of, only then does it show how great and how powerful it is.

Of course, the context is completely different from the Lucanian formula, since Seneca is discussing the endurance and fortitude needed by the virtuous man in order to stand against fortune; there is no expectation, or indeed possibility, of breakthrough. Indeed, Seneca's whole point is to be as immobile an obstacle as possible against the vagaries of fortune. However, the responsion between the wise man and his circumstances is virtually identical to that of Lucan's Caesar: he also needs a worthy opponent in order to demonstrate his true capabilities.[18] Moreover, the language of virtue (*patientia* and *virtus* in its moral sense) is conspicuously absent from the Caesarian formula, which is profoundly destructive in its effect upon the human and political world.

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[17] Hunink (1992) 362 and Narducci (2002) both quote this passage as parallels to Caesar's Book 3 simile above. For possible Senecan influence on Lucan, see Diels (1885) and Hosius (1892).

[18] Such an uncanny similarity in behavioral mechanism adds a new dimension to Cato in Book 9. For Cato's dangerous slippage into Caesarian norms, see Leigh (1997) 265-82 and Hershkowitz (1998) 231-46.

Seneca's tragedies are also full of characters who seek to break through barriers of rightful behavior (and usually succeed in doing so). *Hercules Furens* perhaps comes closest to containing an analogue for the formula. Juno describes the hero in her opening monologue as someone who thrives on the labors given to him: *superat et crescit malis / iraque nostra fruitur* ("he overcomes and grows from his evils and enjoys our anger," 33-34). This mode of growth through endurance may fit in with the purely resistant posture outlined by *De Prov.* above; on the other hand, Seneca's Hercules is a dangerously ambiguous figure who, at least in Juno's mind, seeks to usurp hell (45-46) and heaven (64-65). Such unchecked expansion and even delight in destruction (*iter ruina quaeret / et vacuo volet / regnare mundo*, "he will seek a path through destruction and wish to reign in an empty universe," 67-68) are hallmarks of a personality that Lucan's Caesar would gladly recognize as his own. In this light, Hercules' apparently defensive stance towards Juno takes on formulaic properties as he absorbs her *ira* in order to utilize its energy.

Seneca also has much to say about the process of anger. In *De Ira*, he distinguishes between following one's reason (*ratio*) and *ira*, *cuius proprium est contumacia* ("anger, whose unique property is defiance," I.9.2). Later on, he expands on this definition in vivid similes:

> *Iram saepe misericordia retro egit. habet enim non solidum robur sed vanum tumorem violentisque principiis utitur, non aliter quam qui a terra venti surgunt et fluminibus paludibusque concepti sine pertinacia vehementes sunt: incipit magno impetu, deinde deficit ante tempus fatigata, et, quae nihil aliud quam crudelitatem ac nova genera poenarum versaverat, cum animadvertendum est, iam* [*ira*] *fracta lenisque est*. (*De Ira* I.17.4-5)
>
> Pity has often turned back anger. For it does not have solid strength but empty swelling, and makes use of violent beginnings just like winds that,

> rising from the earth and conceived in rivers and swamps, are forceful without tenacity: it begins with a mighty assault, then weakens, tired before its time, and when it is time for punishment, though it had conceived of nothing but cruelty and new forms of punishment, is now broken and softened.

There is a basic similarity of conception with Lucan here, for Seneca also views anger as prone to rapid deflation and thus volatile and lacking in endurance. By adding a period of re-inflation, Lucan compensates for this weakness. Moreover, the Senecan parallel suggests that the emotional counterpart to the formula is *ira* or *furor*, and that Caesarian behavior is not possible without also taking on these emotions.[19] This connection will prove to be unsettling for Pompey and especially Cato in light of his affinity with Stoicism.

The closest parallel to the Caesarian cycle comes perhaps from a non-human source: the Stoic idea of the cyclical universe, in which the present world order will end in massive conflagration or ἐκπύρωσις, only to be reborn anew.[20] The influence of Stoic cosmology and physics on Lucan has been well discussed.[21] In particular, the similarity of Stoic catastrophe to the formula is perhaps clearest in the simile at 1.72-80, in which Lucan compares the civil war to the fiery end of the universe.[22] However, there is no

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[19] Hershkowitz (1998) 222 makes the important connection between Caesarian destructive energy and *furor*.

[20] The concept of ἐκπύρωσις goes back to Zeno (cf. *SVF* 1.98). However, the fragments of Chrysippus are the most extensive in this regard (*SVF* 2.596-632, esp. 2.605). For further discussion see e.g. Lapidge (1978) 180-84 and Sellars (2006) 81-107. Seneca describes the concept at *Cons. ad Marc.* 26.5ff. The pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* contains a description of ἐκπύρωσις at 391-96 from the mouth of Seneca himself. For general Stoic influence on Lucan, see Schotes (1969).

[21] Lapidge (1979) is the standard study of ἐκπύρωσις in Lucan; on p.351 he suggests the *Theologia Graeca* of Cornutus, Manilius' *Astronomica*, and Seneca the Younger as likely sources for Lucan's knowledge of Stoic theory.

[22] For discussion of this simile, see especially Lapidge (1979), as well as Lebek (1976), Johnson (1987), Masters (1992), Sklenář (2003), and Narducci (2002).

room for rebirth there, since the comparison is deployed as an analogy to the collapse of the state: when the *res publica* has died, it cannot be revived again. Thus, Lucan seems to say that in the chaotic world of civil war, the universe itself has lost its ability to regenerate; in contrast, Caesar, its very destroyer, seems to have stolen this same ability for himself.[23]

Finally, the concept of the Stoic universe as suffused with *pneuma* and thus interconnected in all its parts can be seen as an overall backdrop against the specific nature of the Caesarian cycle. As Ahl states, "the Stoic universe is a dynamic continuum that is infinitely divisible…thus energy released from one part is capable of being transmitted into anything contiguous to it."[24] In particular, as will be seen below, the Antaeus episode demonstrates the importance of the permeability of energy to the operation of the formula.

As for precedents for a cycle of energy in the bibliography, there are only fleeting suggestions to be found. For example, Henderson makes the connection between obstacles and Caesarian regeneration when he observes that *mora* "charges Caesar up to *furor*."[25] Rosner-Siegel traces the continuation of images in the lightning bolt simile

[23] This is my take on the problem raised by Roche (2005), who notes that the rebirth of the universe after catastrophe, required by the orthodox notion of ἐκπύρωσις, is conspicuously absent in Lucan's simile. I thus contend that Lucan deliberately removes the possibility of regeneration from the universe, instead bestowing it upon Caesar. Accordingly, the standard view that Caesar violates nature, as expressed for example in Saylor (1978) 173-74, is only half true: he can do so only because he is a force of nature himself, and only a natural phenomenon, as we will see in Chapter 4, can be mighty enough to stop him.

[24] Ahl (1976) 85.

[25] Henderson (1987) 134.

throughout the epic.[26] Johnson perhaps comes closest to a conception of the formula when he declares that Lucan's Caesar is "a frightened demon imprisoned in a self that can only achieve freedom by exploding, like Lucan's broken machine, like a parody of Stoic *ekpyrosis*," a statement that makes one wish he had said more on the matter.[27] However, one has to look beyond Lucan for a real parallel: in her study *The Madness of Epic*, Debra Hershkowitz discovers a similar dynamic at work in Statius' *Thebaid*. She sees this epic as being pervaded by madness or *furor* to such an extent that it determines the progress of the narrative itself. In her words, the poem is "dependent on madness not only for its initial impetus but also for its continued movement—for without the dynamic processes of madness driving characters and action forward, nothing would happen in this poem."[28] In addition, she makes the important connection between madness and energy in Statius, such that they are completely dependent on each other.[29] She even notes that Statius' similes contain apparently unnecessary details at the end which turn out to have important consequences for the figure under comparison.[30] All these aspects are fundamental to the Caesarian cycle in Lucan (and in view of Lucan's influence the Flavian poets, perhaps serve as direct antecedents to Statius' paradigm).

Furthermore, what truly marks out Hershkowitz as a precedent for the present analysis is that she demonstrates Statius' concern for the dissipation of madness and

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[26] Rosner-Siegel (1983) 165 n.3 notes that there has been no study devoted specifically to imagery in Lucan's similes and its treatment throughout the epic. The present dissertation is an attempt in this direction through the lens of the formula.

[27] Johnson (1987) 111; see also 75 and 103 for similarly pithy but evocative comments on Caesar; Bartsch (1997) 62-63 also views Caesar as being a "force of history" instead of merely human.

[28] Hershkowitz (1998) 248. It must be said that in her chapter on Lucan, she also provides some choice comments on Caesar's *furor* as a cosmic force, which will be referenced in due course.

[29] Hershkowitz (1998) 252.

[30] Hershkowitz (1998) 250.

energy. Because *furor* is dependent on energy (or vice versa), characters in the *Thebaid* who become sane also lose their energy and become stagnant. For example, Amphiaraus performs an *aristeia* in Book 7 of the *Thebaid* with Apollo's assistance, which Statius compares to a collapsing mountain (7.745-51). The simile, however, ends with the cessation of the rockslide, which has no counterpart in the action itself. Thus, Hershkowitz argues that the simile foreshadows Amphiaraus' abandonment by Apollo and eventual disappearance into the underworld—hence a dissipation of his divinely-assisted energy.[31] She finds repeated instances in the epic of this movement from extreme energy to deathlike or indeed deadly exhaustion.[32]

Where Lucan differs from Statius, of course, is that he invests Caesar with the ability to regenerate his *furor*, returning from exhaustion back to assault for another day. This is exactly why he completely outmatches Pompey in every respect. Nevertheless, Hershkowitz provides the only substantial influence for the phenomenon of the formula in Lucan; hopefully both her analysis and that of Lucan's formula will lead to greater understanding of a striking and under-appreciated feature in Silver Latin epic.

In closing, it is not my intention to neglect the political aspects of Lucan's poem, but rather to view them from a different angle.[33] Accordingly, this study does not take as its primary focus the moral or ethical concerns of the poem (well-trodden territory as they are). There is much more to the *BC* than just the anti-Caesarian aspects, and the narrator's revulsion at Caesar and everything he represents does not preclude a keen interest in how he carries out his destruction. I hope to show that Lucan was not only

[31] Hershkowitz (1998) 250-51.

[32] Among her other examples, she cites Thiodamas' nighttime madness at 10.160-75 that results in enervation at 10.286-93 and Tydeus' lone *aristeia* culminating in exhaustion at 2.268-81.

[33] Walde (2005) ix.

interested in depicting the *nefas* of civil war and the *furor* of its perpetrator, but that in describing Caesar with scientific precision, he also demonstrates a fascination with the mechanism by which Caesar wreaks havoc upon the world.[34] And this in turn forms an important part of the "dehumanization" that shapes Lucan's poetics: characterizing Caesar as an impersonal, implacable force of nature has the indirect effect of reducing his merely human opponents to insignificance, such that a counterforce can only be found within the realm of nature itself.

Finally, an eloquent comment from Frederick Ahl, who spearheaded the Lucan revival in the English language, may suffice to show how profoundly he understood, even in those early days of modern Lucan scholarship, that Lucan's epic technique depends on motivic linkage: "each part [of the epic] is separate and discrete, yet each is welded into a continuous whole, linked by various motifs to everything around it. It is a kaleidoscope of moods, incidents, and themes, interlocked with great finesse."[35] In elucidating the twists and turns (or cycles) of the formula, I hope to open up a vista on new motifs for future consideration.

Now that the parameters of the formula have been established, I intend to examine its occurrence in subsidiary characters who behave according to its dictates, hereafter designated "Caesarian" figures. The formula as it applies to Caesar himself will be

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[34] Walde (2007) is a good recent example of a study on Lucan's fascination with natural processes as more than just a learned backdrop. She views Caesar's conquest of nature somewhat too positively on pp.33-34, but at least this is a refreshing change from the usual condemnation of his destructive power and the *nefas* of civil war. See also Schrijvers (2005) for some examples of how Lucan integrates scientific knowledge into his poem.

[35] Ahl (1976) 79-80. Lintott (1971) 493 fittingly describes Lucan's method as "a sort of oratorio technique." Along these lines, Dinter (2005) 295 declares the poem as structured "not in terms of standard means of definition such as linearity, teleology or causality, but in terms of imagery, which unifies the work even as it mirrors and enacts fragmentation."

treated in Chapters 2 and 3. This division arises because the Caesarian figures tend to demonstrate the formula in its purest or most cyclical form, whereas Caesar himself needs to operate with far more finesse on account of the numerous obstacles in his path. Thus, the formulaic similes function more as depictions of ideal behavior for Caesar, whether in a positive sense as the bolt simile, or in the case of the lion simile, a looming fate (and thus a fantasy for the narrator).

2. Caesarian Figures

Marius

The first Caesarian figure we encounter is Marius, who is, along with Sulla, the focus of an analeptic digression at the beginning of Book 2. The anonymous old man who narrates this episode is trying to make sense out of the confusion and fear evoked by Caesar's imminent arrival at Rome (*magno quaerens exempla timori*, "seeking precedents for his great fear," 2.67). It is no surprise, then, that Lucan would choose to depict Marius with the motifs of the Caesarian formula, for the Marian and Sullan carnage is the first example of the civil wars that would ultimately destroy the Roman republic (*servatosque iterum bellis civilibus annos*, "and years preserved once again for civil wars," 2.66), and as such serves to foreshadow the coming catastrophe.

The old man begins at Marius' lowest point:

> *'non alios' inquit 'motus tum fata parabant*
> *cum post Teutonicos victor Libycosque triumphos*
> *exul limosa Marius caput abdidit ulva.*
> *stagna avidi texere soli laxaeque paludes*
> *depositum, Fortuna, tuum…* (2.68-72)

> He says, "The fates were preparing the same upheavals at the time when Marius, victor after his German and Libyan triumphs, concealed his head as an exile in the muddy sedge. The swamps of the greedy earth and the watery marshes covered your deposit, Fortune…"

This is Marius' situation after escaping Sulla's first march on Rome in 88 BC, a pathetic picture of degradation for the once mighty general and six-time consul.[36] However, for a Caesarian figure the lowest depths are always simultaneously the phase of greatest potential, as shown in line 2.70. Just as the lightning bolt retreated back into its cloud, Marius hides his head in the swamp in preparation for his future destructive powers. Lucan also emphasizes the cycle by eliding the history of Marius' career, passing from his foreign victories to his present exile in the space of two lines (2.69-70), skipping Sulla's first civil war entirely. By doing this, Lucan suggests that Marius is exhausted *because* of his foreign victories (and thus the energy expended on them). By deleting politics and history, Lucan represents Marius' trajectory solely in terms of energy and its dissipation. In addition, even though Lucan varies his description by using the financial term *depositum* (2.72), this word actually strengthens Marius' formulaic nature by implying that fortune has stored him away for safekeeping (perhaps also with interest, i.e. growth) in order to be saved and "spent" at a later time.[37]

However, this opening section is not a real recharging, only a prelude. In fact, Marius' stay in jail at Minturnae actually saps his remaining energy: *mox vincula ferri / exedere senem longusque in carcere paedor* ("soon the iron chains and long corruption in jail ate away at the old man," 2.72-73). This kind of corrupting dormancy is the opposite

[36] Bonner (1966) 274-75 observes that Marius was a favorite subject for declaimers to illustrate the reversal and revival of fortune.

[37] Coffee (2009), now the major treatment of commercial language in Latin epic, unfortunately does not cite this example.

of the regenerative kind suggested by the Caesarian formula, which explains why Marius needs to travel to Africa to begin his true regeneration. On the other hand, the jailor experiences a sort of vision: *viderat immensam tenebroso in carcere lucem / terribilisque deos scelerum Mariumque futurum* ("he had seen an immense light in the shadowy prison, the dreadful gods of punishment and the Marius to come," 2.79-80). Lucan nicely merges the avenging gods with Marius' future condition, an implacable and raging butcher of fellow Romans, thus foreshadowing the complete turnaround in his fortunes due to regeneration. The phrase *Mariumque futurum* in particular touches on an important aspect of the formula: to an observer such as Marius' jailer, the degraded figure before him and the avenging god of the vision could not be more different. In a way, the Marius of the revenge killings at Rome will be the embodiment of the Furies, having soaked up their *ira* and that of Africa.

Thus, only upon reaching Libya can Marius begin his true regeneration:

> *idem pelago delatus iniquo*
> *hostilem in terram vacuisque mapalibus actus*
> *nuda triumphati iacuit per regna Iugurthae*
> *et Poenos pressit cineres. solacia fati*
> *Carthago Mariusque tulit, pariterque iacentes*
> *ignovere deis. Libycas ibi colligit iras.* (2.87-92)
>
> That same man, carried on an unfriendly sea into a hostile land, driven from empty huts through the bare kingdoms of Jugurtha whom he had triumphed over, lay down and pressed the Phoenician ashes. Carthage and Marius endured consolation for their fate, and they pardoned the gods while they lay in a similar state. There he gathers Libyan rage.

This is a passage rich with connections not only to the formula, but also to the later desert scenes in Books 4 and 9.[38] In general, Libya is of prime importance to Caesarian figures

[38] Fantham (1992a) 97.

in the epic.[39] Due to its regenerative properties, it is the ideal site where they can withdraw to recharge before wreaking havoc. For Marius, *colligit* signals the presence of a formulaic regeneration, thus linking him to the lion in the Book 1 simile.[40] Likewise, *pressit* also figures Marius' compression of the ashes as formulaic gathering, just as the lightning bolt re-collected its own fragments. However, there are other verbal links as well: *iacuit* here is not just a figurative expression or a touch of humble realism. Instead, the verb connects Marius to Antaeus because (as we will see) each absorbs energy through physical contact with the African soil.[41] In addition, given that Marius' civil war occurs in the past and is clearly a prelude to Caesar's, Lucan is even offering an aetiology of the formula here: Marius was the first to draw upon non-Roman *furor* and to bring it back to Rome, so that Caesar as his descendant (both literally and politically as a *popularis*) can utilize it without actually having to go to the source of this mysterious power. Going back yet another step from history to myth, Marius' physical contact with the African soil makes him an intermediary between Caesar and Antaeus, since the latter's status as earthborn enables him to draw strength directly from the earth, while Marius must regenerate through the ashes of Carthage.[42]

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[39] Ahl (1976) 107-08. The connection between Caesar and Caesarian figures with Hannibal and Africa has long been made (perhaps even first by Cicero at *Att.* 7.11.1). In Lucan, besides the Libyan lion in Book 1, Caesar himself comments at 1.303-05 that his approach to Rome induces such panic as though Hannibal himself were at the gates.

[40] Ahl (1976) 106; Haskins (1887) 43 and Wuillemier and Le Bonniec (1962) 47 both connect *colligit iras* with *colligit iram* at 1.207.

[41] Ahl (1976) 104, quoting Haskins (1887) 43 on 2.93.

[42] In addition, *vacuisque mapalibus actus* describes a movement away from civilization and back to barbarism, as Fantham (1992a) 97 suggests. It also serves as an anthropological trajectory for the formula in that dormancy depends on an uncivilized location (or indeed *latebra*), the better for Caesarian figures to get in touch with their bestial roots.

These ashes, however, are the remains of Rome's foes, one of which Marius himself has conquered (cf. *Libycosque triumphos* at 2.70). Such identification of a Roman with Rome's mortal enemy is key to the dangerous "otherness" of Caesarian behavior, with the implication that it has a disturbing capacity to draw from foreign cultures and landscapes and to incorporate them into its own, thereby augmenting its own power and resilience (as will be seen, this is essentially Caesar's attitude in Troy and Egypt, though his success in these locations is far less certain).[43] Thus, Marius achieves union with Carthage; their separate grievances against Rome overlap: *solacia fati / Carthago Mariusque tulit*. Through Marius, Carthage will have its final revenge; once he has assimilated its power, he can then unleash its rage upon Rome.

Antaeus

As stated above, the Antaeus episode in Book 4 takes us further back in time from history to myth. Perhaps no other digression in the epic is as incidental to the plot, since the only reason we are given for halting the action for some seventy lines is curiosity on Curio's part (*nominis antiqui cupientem noscere causas*, "desiring to know the reason behind this ancient name," 4.591). This suggests that the chief purpose of the digression is an illustration of another formulaic figure in Antaeus, who in a way is the ancestor of them all.[44] His chthonic origin (4.593-94) is evidence of his primeval nature; in effect,

[43] Cf. Sen. *De Prov*. 2.1: *quidquid evenit in suum colorem* [*animus viri fortis*] *trahit* ("[the brave man's spirit] draws whatever happens to him into its own complexion"). Perhaps this is another example of Lucan twisting a Stoic sentiment for his own purpose.

[44] Asso (2002) 63 makes the interesting comment that the *rudis incola* (4.592) who narrates the myth represents the land of Libya itself. If so, perhaps a parallel can be drawn to Acoreus in Book 10: both voice the power of their respective landscapes while each provides a cautionary tale to his own Caesarian audience: Curio unwittingly listens to his own coming defeat, while Caesar (as we will see in Chapter 4) is figuratively overwhelmed by the Nile.

the method of his regeneration is a way for him to draw on his mother's energy long after he has left the "womb." Addressing Curio, the local inhabitant thus describes the monster's lifestyle:

> *hoc quoque tam vastas cumulavit munere vires*
> *Terra sui fetus, quod, cum tetigere parentem,*
> *iam defecta vigent renovato robore membra.*
> *haec illi spelunca domus; latuisse sub alta*
> *rupe ferunt, epulas raptos habuisse leones;*
> *ad somnos non terga ferae praebere cubile*
> *assuerunt, non silva torum, viresque resumit*
> *in nuda tellure iacens*. (4.598-605)
>
> With this gift Earth also augmented the vast strength of her own progeny, namely that, when his limbs made contact with their parent, they would now thrive with renewed strength. This cave was his home: they say he hid under a lofty rock and hunted lions for his feasts; wild beasts did not usually provide him with their skins as a bed to sleep on, nor did the forest provide a couch, and he recovers his strength while lying on the naked earth.

Whenever Antaeus is exhausted, he simply has to lie down and his energy will be replenished. Such a means of renewing his own strength links him, as noted above, to Marius and thus to the Caesarian formula. Thus, Antaeus' sleeping habits are formulaic: *viresque resumit / in nuda tellure iacens*.[45] As Hercules will discover, the moment when Antaeus appears weakest is in fact the exact point in which the cycle turns back towards full strength. However, being of non-mortal origin, Antaeus can utilize the formula in its full cyclical form, which sets him apart from his "descendants" like Marius and Caesar, who are limited by their mortality. Any normal mode of resistance, then, is completely useless against a being of perpetual regeneration as Antaeus is. In order to succeed, one

[45] Antaeus' action here will find a disturbing echo in Cato during his march through Libya at 9.882-83; the significance of this parallel will be considered in Chapter 6.

cannot assault him directly, but must use (just as Hercules will) a stratagem to break the formula.

When the contest begins, at first they seem to be equals in strength: *miranturque habuisse parem* ("and they marvel at meeting an equal," 4.620). Given Antaeus' secret, this means that purely on his own and unaided by regeneration, he is as powerful as Hercules. But Lucan undercuts this statement immediately:

> *nec viribus uti*
> *Alcides primo voluit certamine totis*,
> *exhausitque virum, quod creber anhelitus illi*
> *prodidit et gelidus fesso de corpore sudor.*
> *tum cervix lassata quati, tum pectore pectus*
> *urgueri, tunc obliqua percussa labare*
> *crura manu. iam terga viri cedentia victor*
> *alligat et medium compressis ilibus artat*
> *inguinaque insertis pedibus distendit et omnem*
> *explicuit per membra virum*. (4.620-29)
>
> Nor did Hercules wish to use his entire strength in the first bout, and he wore out the man, as the constant gasping and cold sweat from a tired body revealed to him. Then his tired neck trembled, then chest thrust on chest, then legs struck slantwise by hand buckled. Now the winner binds the man's yielding back and tightens his middle, squeezing his sides and stretches his groin by inserting his feet, and laid out the entire man along all his limbs.

Again, as so often in the epic, a *par* is not really a *par*, since Hercules is going easy on his opponent by saving his strength for later.[46] Lucan's description of their struggle is murky: *virum* in line 4.622 must refer to Antaeus, but because one would expect it to refer to Hercules instead of an earthborn giant, a sense of ambiguity is thus created.[47] Moreover, in the following six lines, Lucan provides no proper noun or patronymic, thus

[46] For *par* in general, see Ahl (1976) 86-88 and Masters (1992) 109-10. For unequal *pares*, see Masters (1992) 35 with n.62.

[47] Asso (2010) 236. Merli (2005) 128 makes the interesting observation that Lucan's fivefold designation of Antaeus as *vir* in the entire episode has a purpose: the transformation of Antaeus from monster into human. This has formulaic implications, as seen below.

leaving in doubt the nature of the winner at any given moment.[48] The point is that even while Lucan narrates Hercules' first victory over Antaeus, thus showing that the two are no real *par* if considered purely on their own strength alone, by keeping the identity of the two contestants as vague as possible, he maintains the illusion that this fight is between a real *par*.[49] Hercules could potentially be struggling because he is not using his full strength, just as Antaeus is also not drawing on his full reserve of chthonic energy.

However, when Hercules manages to lay Antaeus out, a remarkable transformation occurs:

> *rapit arida tellus*
> *sudorem; calido complentur sanguine venae,*
> *intumuere tori, totosque induruit artus*
> *Herculeosque novo laxavit corpore nodos*. (4.629-32)
>
> The dry earth sucks in his sweat; his veins are filled with hot blood, his muscles bulge, he hardened all his limbs and loosened Hercules' grip with a fresh body.

Lucan depicts this process as an exchange of fluids: cold sweat for hot blood. From other examples in the epic, he seems to have been aware of the necessity of circulation of the blood for bodily vigor.[50] The detail Lucan uses in describing the process of Antaeus' regeneration is also evidence of a keen attention to biological matters.[51] In a way, it is not just that Antaeus' bodily fluids are being exchanged; we might view his sweat as

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[48] Such focus on infinitives with adverbs concentrates the viewer on the action, as Asso (2010) 237 states, but also obscures the identity of the participants.

[49] This is precisely the same trick he uses with Caesar and Pompey, who are described as *pares* even though their Book 1 similes already dispel this notion.

[50] Asso (2010) 240, who cites some relevant examples, most notable being a line from Laelius' speech at 1.363. As a diehard supporter of Caesar, it is particularly fitting that Lucan should make him aware of the biological underpinnings of the formula. Despite Pompey's protestations to the contrary at 2.557-58, it is the Caesarians who are most in touch with blood and its circulation. Cf. also the self-propelled river of blood in the Book 2 Sullan flashback.

[51] Asso (2010) 241, who notes that the precision of line 4.630 marks it out as unique in Latin poetry.

"blood" that has lost its potency after being depleted in his exertions (and hence become cold)—sweat that is either replaced by fresh (and thus hot) blood or even renewed in the earth. Thus Antaeus' regeneration would be fully formulaic in terms of one element (his bodily fluids) transitioning between two different states.[52]

However, the infusion of new blood into Antaeus also has large-scale implications: *intumuere* at 4.631 is effective both figuratively and literally, as if new blood were actually filling his muscles.[53] The motif of swelling has surprising implications for the formula, since it connects the swelling of *ira* with the literal swelling of rivers in Lucan, first seen (however weakly) as Caesar crosses the Rubicon at 1.204. It thus suggestively equates Caesarian behavior with that of his greatest natural opponent. This issue will be examined in Chapter 4.

For the rest of the battle, at least until Hercules finds an effective counterattack to Antaeus' cyclical behavior, the contest between the two can best be described thus: *conflixere pares, Telluris viribus ille, / ille suis* ("they did battle as equals, one with the strength of Earth, the other with his own," 4.636-37). This is not to be taken only as rhetorical brilliance or a single *sententia*, but it sums up the crisis in which Hercules finds himself. That is, Lucan dispels the mirage of an equal *par*, as the hero is in effect doing battle with the entirety of the chthonic power, of which Antaeus is merely the embodiment.[54] A few lines later, Lucan strengthens this point: *quisquis inest terris in fessos spiritus artus / egeritur, Tellusque viro luctante laborat* ("Whatever energy is

[52] In addition, *intumuere tori* suggests that the swelling, as Asso (2010) 241 points out, is due to the infusion of new blood.

[53] Asso (2010) 241.

[54] *Pace* Asso (2010) 242, who thinks that the strength of Hercules and Tellus do match each other. Presumably, Antaeus would simply have to regenerate continuously until Hercules exhausts himself once and for all.

present in the land is added to his tired limbs, and Earth struggles as the man labors," 4.643-44).[55] Even though Hercules' strength is so prodigious that even the earth is beginning to struggle, these lines reveal another aspect of the formula which I call the "core." This term refers to the center of a character or entity from which energy flows outward to power its actions, and which will prove to be a crucial and wide-ranging motif, present in both Caesarian figures as well as those that resist him. Ideally, this core is completely out of reach of attack and is thus invulnerable, so that no matter how much damage the formulaic figure incurs, he would never perish for good but would have a permanent and untouchable source of energy on which to draw. Such invincibility was hinted at in the Book 1 bolt simile, since there the cloud served as the refuge from which the lightning could complete its self-assembly in peace. However, it finds its first full realization in Antaeus.

In this case, the earth serves as Antaeus' hidden center, granting him access to a reserve of energy that Hercules has no way of reaching. Therefore, the only way for the hero to win is to cut Antaeus off from the possibility of regeneration, or in other words, to straighten out the Caesarian cycle into a linear path to exhaustion and death: *'standum est tibi,' dixit 'et ultra / non credere solo, sternique vetabere terra* ("'You must stand,' he said, 'I will entrust you no more to the ground, and you will be forbidden to stretch out on the land,'" 4.646-47).[56] Raised aloft by Hercules, Antaeus no longer maintains his vital

[55] Ahl (1976) 100 identifies *spiritus* as the Stoic *pneuma*, noting the permeability between organic and inorganic matter that characterizes the Stoic universe. However, Lapidge (1979) 345 views Ahl's identification as a misunderstanding of Stoic theory.

[56] Ahl (1976) 95-96 notes that Hercules' victory is due to his intelligence instead of mere strength. In general, his view that the contest between Hercules and Antaeus is about civilization and barbarism is overstated: Martindale (1981) 71-73 shows that Lucan was not interested in making Hercules an exemplar of any kind. In addition, such intelligence as Hercules shows here can easily be viewed as cleverness,

link to the earth, and thus his energy slowly fades (*morientis in artus / non potuit nati Tellus permittere vires*, "the Earth could not transmit her strength into the limbs of her dying son," 4.650-51). In a pointed reminiscence of his initial regeneration, Antaeus grows cold (*pectora pigro / stricta gelu*, "his chest bound in slow chill," 4.652-53) without being able return to warmth.

The conclusion of the battle is thus somewhat anticlimactic: *terrisque diu non credidit hostem* ("for a long time he did not entrust his enemy to the earth," 4.653). Even though Antaeus must logically be dead, Lucan curiously does not linger on this fact by providing graphic confirmation, as, for example, Vergil does in the case of Cacus (such as *informe cadaver*, "misshapen corpse," at *Aen.* 8.264). Nor is Hercules even described; instead, the narrative simply peters out. It is almost as if Lucan is teasing the reader here, much as he does in the beginning of the fight when it was not clear who was winning until Antaeus was overthrown for the first time. In terms of the formula, the most plausible explanation for this narrative "fadeout" is due to the unique way by which Hercules must dispatch his opponent. Since he can only extricate Antaeus from the formula's infinite loop by dispatching him in mid-air and thus removing the usual satisfying finality of a fatal blow, Lucan also matches this unconventional maneuver in his narrative technique by muting his description of Antaeus' death.[57] Caesarian figures can only be vanquished by not allowing them the luxury of a normal death which, because of the formula, passes directly into dormancy and revival. To the observer (or

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which then shades into the *Libycae fraudes* that enable Juba to spring his trap as he surrounds Curio's army like Hercules. No dichotomy escapes untouched by the confusion of civil war.

[57] The narrative is not the only thing that ebbs away: as Merli (2005) 128 observes, Antaeus literally shrinks at the moment of his death: *sustulit alte / nitentem in terras iuvenem* ("he raised high the youth who was straining for the earth," 4.649-50). His metamorphosis from monster to helpless adolescent is thus complete. In formulaic terms, this disconnection from his mother's rejuvenating powers actually changes his physical form, reducing him to human status.

reader), however, such an end will be devoid of spectacle. In fact, the formula is deceptive precisely in this fashion: the impact and shattering of the thunderbolt or the lion's self-impaling are thrilling displays of raw power, and all the more so because of their suicidal nature. Yet this apocalyptic destruction blinds the spectator to the rebirth that must occur in the shadows. By contrast, the end of the Antaeus digression indicates that Caesarian figures can only be dispatched unostentatiously, in silence, and perhaps even without conventional glory—features that characterize the last moments of Caesar in Book 10.

For all the time spent on this digression, the *incola* apparently now wishes to emphasize a victory closer to Curio's own time:

> *hinc, aevi veteris custos, famosa vetustas,*
> *miratrixque sui, signavit nomine terras.*
> *sed maiora dedit cognomina collibus istis*
> *Poenum qui Latiis revocavit ab arcibus hostem,*
> *Scipio; nam sedes Libyca tellure potito*
> *haec fuit. en, veteris cernis vestigia valli.*
> *Romana hos primum tenuit victoria campos.* (4.654-60)
>
> Thus antiquity, guardian of ancient times granting renown and admirer of itself, marked these lands with his name. But Scipio, who recalled the Punic enemy from Latin fortresses, gave a greater name to these hills; for this was his location after he possessed the Libyan earth. Look! you can make out traces of the old rampart. Roman victory first held these fields.

Lucan thus surprises the reader: he has the *incola* narrate all this mythological material (*rudis* at 4.592 surely ironic), only to have him undercut it in favor of associating the location with Scipio's victory over Carthage.[58] The reason for this is that, even though Hercules vanquished Antaeus, this area is still known as *Antaei regna* (4.590): the Caesarian presence still inheres in the name even though the formulaic giant has been

[58] *Miratrixque sui* is mildly sarcastic, signaling a rejection of prehistory; Asso's (2010) 246 conclusion that Lucan is rejecting Vergilian poetics goes a bit too far.

defeated.[59] The *incola* does not stress the significance of Hercules' victory, instead turning to a historical *exemplum*. Consequently, Curio associates himself with the great Roman hero who vanquished the native barbarians: *Curio laetatus, tamquam fortuna locorum / bella gerat servetque ducum sibi fata priorum*, ("Curio was delighted, as though the location's fortune would wage wars and keep the fate of prior generals for him," 4.661-62).[60] Thus, the unsettling lesson of formulaic power defeated goes unnoticed by him, though it is not lost on the perceptive reader. Lucan shows that Curio is blind to the reality of his role in the civil war: *felici non fausta loco tentoria ponens / inclusit castris et collibus abstulit omen* ("placing his ill-starred tents in a lucky location, he spread out his camp and removed the omen from the hills," 4.663-64). In fact, this comment works on two levels: not only does Curio negate the positive *nomen/omen* of Scipio that the *incola* wished to emphasize, but he will also fail to take advantage of the Caesarian, regenerative properties of the Libyan soil in general.[61] Yet at the same time, he will die like Antaeus, thus fulfilling the mythological *omen* of which he seems to be oblivious.[62]

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[59] Ahl (1976) 96-97.

[60] Ahl (1976) 90-94 sees the Curio episode as a parody of *Aeneid* 8: Curio is a degraded Aeneas, the *incola* as a "dwarf Evander" who narrates a tale of Hercules vanquishing another monster, Cacus.

[61] Saylor (1982) 171 argues that Curio does have an affinity to Scipio's landing, the *Castra Cornelia*, and it is only when he leaves the hills for the flatland that Juba is able to ambush him. However, there is no objective evidence for any special bond on Curio's part: the link is all in his mind, as shown by *tamquam* with the subjunctive. Still, he makes an important point on p.172 in saying that Curio is "out of touch with his natural environment," and thus cannot partake in the formula like Marius or Antaeus. Sklenář (2003) 36-37 brings up the otherwise neglected point that Curio actually lands *inter semirutas Carthaginis arces* ("among the half-collapsed citadels of Carthage," 4.585), thus linking him to both Rome and Carthage. This is, he argues, is an unnatural union symbolic of "the division of Rome against itself in the civil war," but Lucan's mention of the ruins of Carthage is also an ironic reference back to Marius, who also landed among its ruins. As we will see, while Marius was able to utilize the regenerative power of these ruins and of the landscape, Curio will not be able to do so.

[62] Thompson and Bruère (1970) 169-70. Ahl (1976) 102 argues against this connection since he wishes to keep Juba firmly in the African and thus "anti-civilization" side. I agree with Saylor (1982), who provides

Formulaic Moments in the Curio Narrative

Turning now to the final section of Book 4, Curio's campaign against Varus and Juba, we move from similes and digressions to the level of the main narrative. As stated in the introduction, the formula loosens up once we are in the world of the plot, which is why Caesar himself will not be discussed until the next chapter. However, it is helpful to test the waters with this particular section because it is so intimately connected with the previous episode. Moreover, it reveals another important fact about the cycle:

> *Omnis Romanis quae cesserat Africa signis*
> *tum Vari sub iure fuit; qui robore quamquam*
> *confisus Latio regis tamen undique vires*
> *excivit, Libycas gentis, extremaque mundi*
> *signa suum comitata Iubam*. (4.666-70)
>
> All of Africa which had yielded to Roman standards was then under the command of Varus; although he relied on Latin strength, nevertheless he called up the king's forces from all sides—the Libyan nations—and the outermost standards of the world following their own Juba.

Even though Varus is on the republican side, he draws on the African forces of Juba, thus participating in the formula by way of its African origins. Furthermore, the very act of gathering widely scattered forces (*extremaque mundi / signa*) calls to mind the action of the thunderbolt in the Book 1 simile: *sparsosque recolligit ignes*.[63] Lucan also stresses the movement from diffuseness to concentration by describing Juba's territory as *non fusior ulli / terra fuit domino* ("no lord had a more expansive land," 4.670-71), as though the very land itself were a reserve of dormant energy waiting to be summoned. In this

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the most nuanced reading of this passage: he associates both Juba and Curio with Antaeus, but the former as a successful and the latter an unsuccessful version of the monster.

[63] *Pace* Masters (1992) 94, who cites *extremaque mundi* as indicating that Juba is Pompeian (in any case, it is Varus who is the Pompeian, as the Roman commander who actually summons his barbarian ally).

way he makes a subtle connection to the living earth in the Antaeus episode. We thus see the Pompeians taking the initiative in being formulaic—a most unexpected move. This foreshadows Pompey's attempts to behave according to Caesarian norms in Book 6, and suggests that in order to be successful against Caesar, the Pompeians must throw off the attitude of *mora* and take on his properties. Their ultimate failure to do so and its ramifications will be considered in Chapter 5.

However, let us return to more immediate concerns. Among the mini-catalogue of Libyan tribes summoned by Varus, one in particular offers clues to the outcome of the contest:

> *…et solitus vacuis errare mapalibus Arzux*
> *venator, ferrique simul fiducia non est,*
> *vestibus iratos laxis operire leones*.[64] (4.684-86)
>
> …and the Arzucian hunter, accustomed to wandering among empty huts, as soon as he has no trust in his spear, covers angry lions with loose garments.

Line 4.684 is reminiscent of 2.89, which describes Marius' refuge in Libya (*vacuisque mapalibus actus*): this would seem to associate the Arzuges with the Caesarian side. However, line 4.686 complicates matters: these tribesmen hunt African lions, the same creatures as in the Book 1 simile. Furthermore, unlike the head-on clash between lion and javelin in that simile, they trap the lions by enveloping them in cloth. This kind of approach is reminiscent of Hercules' bear-hug against Antaeus, and foreshadows the envelopment of Curio's army at the end of the book, reinforcing the notion that

[64] *Arzux* is Morgan's emendation for the MSS *Afer*, as described in Shackleton-Bailey (1987) 81; he cites Sidonius *Carm.* 5.336-37 in support. Asso (2010) 259 agrees, adding that *Afer venator* would be out of place after the variety of tribal names in the preceding lines.

successful opposition to Caesarian force must be indirect.[65] Thus, the seemingly straightforward correspondence of African to Caesarian is complicated, for this African tribe is behaving like Hercules, the conqueror of the native African.

Nevertheless, the Pompeian Varus fails at trying to be Caesarian and grants Curio an easy win which Lucan briefly sketches in just two lines (4.714-15), thus giving him unwarranted confidence in ultimate victory: *quem blanda futuris / deceptura malis belli fortuna recepit* ("whom war's fortune received pleasantly, soon to deceive him with coming evils," 4.711-12). As we will see, however, Curio's trust is misplaced. On hearing news of Varus' defeat, Juba decides to send his lieutenant Sabbura to spring a trap on Curio (4.720-22). While this may be an example of proverbial Carthaginian perfidy, the outcome of this trap, which is to envelop Curio's army, is also the same tactic that Hercules used to dispatch Antaeus. Again, the putative dichotomy of Hercules as civilized versus the barbarian Antaeus breaks down as Juba imitates Hercules tactically. On the other hand, if we maintain the connection between Juba and Hercules, we also gain insight into the formula: its dormant phase, especially its "core" aspect, functions as a trap in itself. After all, Antaeus' weakness fooled Hercules into thinking that he had defeated him on the first try, while his true reserve of energy remained invisible. Likewise, Juba will send his aide Sabbura out to provoke a battle with weak forces (*exigua qui proelia prima lacessat / eliciatque manu*, "who would provoke first battle and draw them out with a tiny force," 7.720-21) while he keeps the bulk of his forces hidden (*ipse cava regni vires in valle retentat*, "he retains his kingdom's forces in a hollow valley," 7.722; note that Lucan also describes Antaeus' home as a cave at 4.601-02). It

[65] The necessity for indirect warfare is also due to the suicidal nature of a head-on clash in civil war, e.g. 1.6-7.

seems that Juba, then, is able to utilize both Antaeus' and Hercules' techniques, while Curio will be shown as capable of practicing neither.

Juba's stratagem occasions a simile on an ichneumon's duel with a serpent:

> *aspidas ut Pharias cauda sollertior hostis*
> *ludit et iratas incerta provocat umbra*
> *obliquusque caput vanas serpentis in auras*
> *effusae tuto comprendit guttura morsu*
> *letiferam citra saniem; tunc irrita pestis*
> *exprimitur faucesque fluunt pereunte veneno*. (4.724-29)
>
> As a cleverer enemy tricks Pharian asps with his tail, angering and provoking them with his vague shadow, and, with his head at an angle, grabs the snake's throat with a safe bite after it stretches out into the empty air, just short of the deadly poison; then the useless scourge is squeezed out and the jaws melt with dying venom.

Like Lucan's other formulaic similes, this one is also enmeshed in a network of associations.[66] The ichneumon's feints and provocations may once again be taken as signs of Punic trickery, but the choice of snake as a counterpart to Curio also connects the Roman to Africa (especially if one recalls the Libyan snakes in Book 9). By the same token, the ichneumon, instead of facing the snake's venom directly and thus being at a grave disadvantage, opts to neutralize it through a lateral maneuver, just as Hercules breaks Antaeus' cycle.[67]

In fact, if we think about the two episodes more closely, we see an additional connection between the giant and the snake: they both rely on liquids—blood and venom respectively—as fundamental to their mode of attack. Likewise, Hercules and the ichneumon both render their enemies' liquids ineffective: the former prevents Antaeus

[66] Hinkle (1996) 96-97, who sees connections both to Book 9 and Book 10; likewise Asso (2010) 267, who links the asp to Cleopatra. However, even though the asp is Egyptian (*Pharias*), there is a far stronger connection to the snake episode in Book 9.

[67] Ahl's (1976) 102 has a point that the ichneumon's feints mirror Carthaginian *perfidia*, but the snake has just as close an affinity to Africa through Antaeus.

from reaching his source of fresh blood, while the latter renders the snake's flow of venom harmless. In both cases, the core remains intact (even though Lucan evocatively describes the venom itself as perishing along with its host), but its capacity to harm is removed through the death of the organism that can access it. Through the intermediary of the simile, therefore, Lucan associates Curio with Antaeus and thus with his doom.

Curio's Formulaic Failure

Before analyzing Curio's final defeat, it would be helpful at this point to go back and review his actions during the campaign, since his behavior, his relationship with his men, and their final actions during the ambush all show a failure to be formulaic.[68] Lucan first hints at this flaw while describing the makeup of his army:

> *hac igitur regis trepidat iam Curio fama*
> *et quod Caesareis numquam devota iuventus*
> *illa nimis castris nec Rheni miles in undis*
> *exploratus erat, Corfini captus in arce,*
> *infidusque novis ducibus dubiusque priori*
> *fas utrumque putat*. (4.694-99)
>
> Thus Curio trembles at this rumor of the king and because those youths were never devoted to Caesar's camp, nor were the soldiers tested on the Rhine's waters, captured in Corfinium's citadel; untrusted by their new leaders and dubious to their former, they think each side in the right.

Even though Curio is wary of Juba's reputation (which, however, does not stop him from falling into his trap at the end), the more important issue here is the reliability of his own troops. They lack experience and their loyalty is questionable; this disconnect between commander and army is extremely rare for Caesar (it occurs only during the mutiny in

[68] Lucan subtly hints at this failure even at the beginning of the entire section when he describes Curio landing at the ruins of Carthage (4.585). Unlike Marius, who can utilize the Punic ruins to recharge, Curio will prove unable to do so. The irony is enhanced by the contrast between their respective statuses: Curio is the head of an army while Marius is completely degraded.

Book 5), but is much more characteristic of Pompey's relationship with his armies. We thus have a role reversal here: not only did the Pompeian Varus gather his armies in Caesarian fashion at the beginning of this section, but now the ostensibly Caesarian Curio appears to be taking on Pompeian traits. Strangely, the erasing of moral boundaries as a result of civil war (*fas utrumque putat*) actually serves to weaken Curio here by producing only indifference to fighting, not a fanatical loyalty such as, for example, Laelius shows in his Book 1 speech when he offers to slaughter his kin for Caesar (1.376-78).[69]

Both Lucan's description of the army's situation and Curio's speech only strengthen these suspicions:

> *sed, postquam languida segni*
> *cernit cuncta metu nocturnaque munera valli*
> *desolata fuga, trepida sic mente profatur:*
> *'audendo magnus tegitur timor; arma capessam*
> *ipse prior. campum miles descendat in aequum,*
> *dum meus est; variam semper dant otia mentem.*
> *eripe consilium pugna: cum dira voluptas*
> *ense subit presso, galeae texere pudorem,*
> *quis conferre duces meminit, quis pendere causas!*
> *qua stetit, inde favet; veluti fatalis harenae*
> *muneribus non ira vetus concurrere cogit*
> *productos, odere pares.'* (4.699-710)
>
> But after he sees everything inert with sluggish fear and the nocturnal duties of the rampart deserted in flight, he thus speaks with trembling mind: "Great fear is concealed through daring; I myself will be the first to take up arms. Let the soldiers descend to the level plain as long as they are mine; idleness always makes the mind wander. Throw caution away in battle: when terrible passion rises and the sword is gripped and helmets conceal blushing, who remembers to compare the leaders, who to weigh causes! He supports the side on which he stands; just as those brought out in contests on the deadly sand are not compelled to engage through ancient anger, for they hate each other as equals."

[69] Sklenář (2003) 40 cites *fas utrumque putat* as contributing to the disloyalty of Curio's troops.

First of all, the description of the men leaves much to be desired: this is certainly not a force in which one could place much confidence. *Languida, segni, metu* and especially *fuga* are words that seem more at home on the Pompeian side. Worst of all, their general is doubtful (*trepida…mente*), and Lucan neatly keeps this uncertainty under the surface of his speech, no matter how blustery Curio sounds on the surface. Even though Curio begins by exhorting his troops (*audendo magnus tegitur timor*), the very admission of fear renders his attempts to overcome it futile, as Juba's ambush will prove. He continues to talk tough without any reason for doing so: at lines 4.703-05 Curio orders them into a state of frenzy simply because he can (knocking *furor* into them cold, as it were)—a most un-Caesarian act (recall Caesar's Book 3 simile and the necessity of an opponent to spur his *furor*).[70] In formulaic terms, the men are in dormancy (*otia*), and Curio's job is to regenerate them and bring them to a fever pitch; however, he seems distant from the formula, since it only operates correctly under the influence of a hostile force. In addition, *dum meus est* adds a note of imperiousness, but only in order to highlight Curio's lack of stature compared to Caesar's genuine authority. Therefore, the idea behind *eripe consilium pugna*, which implies a mindless *furor* that is usually Caesarian, instead causes a carelessness which leads them to fall for Juba's trap.[71] In closing, Curio frames the coming battle as a mindless duty like gladiatorial combat.[72] To be fair, this total rejection of *causae* may be due to the presence of the recent Pompeian

[70] Curio's dullness here stands in contrast to his Book 1 speech, in which he exhibits insight into the mechanics of the Caesarian cycle at 1.281. Of course, there he has a much easier time, for Caesar was already leaning towards action anyway; Curio only needed to act as a prompter.

[71] Asso (2010) 263 renders this clause to mean that Curio may be apostrophizing his own *mens* here, a reading that could well apply to the entire speech. In that case, the army's fate is sealed even more securely, for if the general himself is sluggish, there can be no hope for his troops.

[72] Ahl (1976) 98 notes the indifference to and distance from the conflict that this reveals in Curio.

recruits. However, even here Curio slips up in spite of himself as he tries to deny anger (*non ira*) as a motivating factor, thus depriving his men of the key emotional counterpart of the formula; contrast this with Juba's *privatae…irae* (4.698). All things considered, then, Curio's speech is a failure.

When Curio makes the fateful decision to proceed into the valley, this action leaves him spread out (with help from Juba's feint): *cum procul e summis conspecti collibus hostes / fraude sua cessere parum, dum colle relicto / effusam patulis aciem committeret arvis* ("when the enemy, seen from afar on the hilltops, yielded a little in their treachery until he abandoned the hill and engaged his spread-out troops on the wide-open fields," 4.741-43). Such diffuseness is the opposite of Varus and Juba's gathering and tightening of their widely scattered forces as described in the beginning of the section. Left diffuse and weak, he presents the perfect opportunity for ambush. When Juba springs his trap, Curio's army is strangely unresponsive.[73] Lucan describes the enervation of the war-horses:

> *ut primum patuere doli, Numidaeque fugaces*
> *undique completis clauserunt montibus agmen,*
> *obstipuit dux ipse simul perituraque turba.*
> *non timidi petiere fugam, non proelia fortes,*
> *quippe ubi non sonipes motus clangore tubarum*
> *saxa quatit pulsu rigidos vexantia frenos*
> *ora terens spargitque iubas et subrigit aures*
> *incertoque pedum pugnat non stare tumultu:*
> *fessa iacet cervix, fumant sudoribus artus*
> *oraque proiecta squalent arentia lingua,*
> *pectora rauca gemunt, quae creber anhelitus urguet,*
> *et defecta gravis longe trahit ilia pulsus*
> *siccaque sanguineis durescit spuma lupatis*. (4.746-58)
>
> As the trickery was first revealed and the fleeing Numidians filled up the mountains and closed off the army on every side, at this moment the

[73] Bramble (1982) 548-49 comments on the abnormality of this battle, in which nothing happens as expected from a literary point of view.

> general and his crowd, soon to die, were dumbstruck. The fearful did not seek flight, the brave did not seek battle, seeing that the horse, not stirred by the din of trumpets, does not shake or beat the rocks or rub its mouth that was chafing the stiff reins nor fans out its mane nor perks its ears nor fights to stand with its feet's ambivalent commotion: its tired neck is prone, its joints fume with sweat and its parched mouth is rough with lolling tongue, its hoarse chest groans, driven by constant panting; heavy beating contracts its exhausted flanks, and dry foam hardens on its bloody bit.

This passage is evenly balanced between Lucan's favorite *non* sequences and what actually occurs (five lines for each). The horses are unable to function in a proper Caesarian manner, but instead are completely exhausted.[74] Why this failure to act in accordance with the cycle, since the appearance of an opposing force should activate a gathering of strength? The answer, again, lies with the Antaeus episode. Just as the giant was prevented from regeneration by Hercules' trick of killing him in midair, so the horses' exhaustion is due to Juba's trap. In addition, the focus on moisture (or lack thereof) in lines 4.754-58 adds to the relationship between Curio's cavalry and Antaeus.[75] Just as Lucan signified Antaeus' exhaustion by sweat, so the horses sweat (*fumant sudoribus artus*) in their labor. However, this shedding of moisture is not compensated by fresh infusion, so the horses gasp with dryness.

The riders attempt to goad the animals into action:

> *iamque gradum neque verberibus stimulisque coacti*
> *nec quamvis crebris iussi calcaribus addunt:*
> *vulneribus coguntur equi; nec profuit ulli*
> *cornipedis rupisse moras, neque enim impetus ille*
> *incursusque fuit: tantum perfertur ad hostis*
> *et spatium iaculis oblato vulnere donat*. (4.759-64)

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[74] Bramble (1982) 550 detects influence from Vergil's plague symptoms at *Geo.* 3.500ff.

[75] Asso (2010) 275 well observes the similarity between both passages in their concentration on physical details; in addition, note the exact repetition of *creber anhelitus* at 4.622 and 4.746 as well as *cervix lassata* at 4.624 and *fessa…cervix* at 4.754.

> And now they gain pace, neither forced by whips and goads nor ordered by constant spurs: the horses are compelled by wounds; nor did it benefit anyone to break their steed's delay, for that was neither an attack nor an onrush: he is only delivered to his enemies and grants space for javelins in offering wounds.

Conventional methods of incitement are useless, so they must resort to injuring the horses. This action, however, involves Curio in the fatal action of civil war self-injury, which is not the right way to induce formulaic regeneration. Wounds are supposed to be incurred in the outburst itself, not before. Thus, even though the men succeed in Caesarian breakthrough (*rupisse moras*), it proves useless.[76] The last two lines allude to the Book 1 lion simile, but instead of harming the enemy and leading to possible death, the self-goading of Curio's army leads only to death, i.e., to all of the formula's potential weaknesses and none of its benefits. Crucially, Curio's men are unable to act formulaically at the very moment of crisis.

Once the cycle has begun to break down, its malfunction continues. Juba's deployment of his cavalry (4.765) initiates the final stage of the battle:

> *sic undique saepta iuventus*
> *comminus obliquis et rectis eminus hastis*
> *obruitur, non vulneribus nec sanguine solum,*
> *telorum nimbo peritura et pondere ferri.*
> *ergo acies tantae parvum spissantur in orbem,*
> *ac, si quis metuens medium correpsit in agmen,*
> *vix impune suos inter convertitur enses;*
> *densaturque globus, quantum pede prima relato*
> *constrinxit gyros acies. non arma movendi*
> *iam locus est pressis, stipataque membra teruntur;*
> *frangitur armatum colliso pectore pectus.*
> *non tam laeta tulit victor spectacula Maurus*
> *quam Fortuna dabat; fluvios non ille cruoris*
> *membrorumque videt lapsum et ferientia terram*

[76] *Rumpere moras* is one of Caesar's favorite activities: it occurs at 1.204 by the Rubicon, at 1.264 when fate is on his side, and most ironically in view of Book 4, in Curio's own exhortation at 1.281.

> *corpora: compressum turba stetit omne cadaver*. (4.773-87)
>
> Thus the youth, hemmed in from all sides, is overwhelmed at close range by slanting spears and from afar by spears head-on, soon to die not only from wounds and blood, but by a cloud of shafts and the weight of iron. Such a great army is thus compacted into a little ball, and whoever in fright creeps into the middle of the host can hardly turn around among his own side's swords; the sphere gets denser as the front of the line steps back and tightens the circle. Now there is no space for them, squeezed as they are, to move their weapons, and their crowded limbs are crushed; armored chests break, crushed against chest. The Moor in his victory did not have such a glad spectacle as Fortune gave them; he sees no rivers of blood nor limbs falling nor bodies striking the earth: every corpse was standing, packed in by the crowd.

Curio's army is defeated in a way that explicitly recalls the technique by which Hercules dispatched Antaeus.[77] The connection between the two figures, adumbrated in the entire section, is now finally revealed. Yet as we have seen, Curio is if anything a much debased version of the giant. At least Antaeus was able to utilize the formula before Hercules figured out a way to circumvent it; Curio completely fails at his formulaic attempts. If he dies like a Caesarian figure, it is only as the parody of one. While it is true that Juba's knowledge of the Libyan landscape (which enables him to spring his trap) can be compared with Antaeus' intimate connection to the earth,[78] the result is not simply to place Juba on the Caesarian side, but also to suggest that he wields both Antaean and Herculean techniques, thus usurping Curio's "heritage" as a Caesarian. This leaves the Roman with no mythical paradigm on which he can rely—hence his defeat.

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[77] This observation is made by Ahl (1976) 103 (who however states that Curio failed to learn Hercules' lesson, when it is rather that he failed to live up to his Caesarian formulaic heritage), Saylor (1982) 174-75, and Hinkle (1996) 99-100. Saylor, however, goes too far in discounting the role of Juba entirely and claiming that the compression is entirely self-generated, ignoring 4.773-75 and thus missing the link with Hercules.

[78] Hinkle (1996) 96-97.

A final detail shows Curio's failure to be cyclical: the compression of his army as it is surrounded by Juba's leads to death.[79] According to the formula, compression and a gathering of his dissipated forces should result in a concentration of energy. This sequence occurs (*acies…parvum spissantur in orbem* and *densaturque globus*), but results once again in self-injury (*vix impune suos inter convertitur enses*), just as the riders had to wound their own mounts in order to induce charging that proved useless anyway. Thus, Curio undergoes only a deformation of the formula, a parodic turning in on itself. It is here that Curio's fantasy of Scipio as an *exemplum* is cruelly reversed: Juba bottles up his army just as Scipio did Hannibal's (recall 4.657 above). To be sure, Curio's army never had the chance to break out in the first place: Scipio had to roll back the Punic menace first before containing it within its own shores, but the difference shows just how distant Curio is in his African-Caesarian heritage even from Hannibal, not to mention Antaeus. Thus penned in, Caesarian energy starts feeding on itself as bodies, not just spears and swords, become weapons (*frangitur armatum colliso pectore pectus*). Instead of being able to direct this energy outwards, Curio's army instead turns on itself in a microcosm of civil war.[80]

The Antaeus and Curio episodes thus introduce several themes that will play an important role across the rest of the epic. First of all, Lucan introduces the phenomenon

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[79] Moreover, the slow encirclement and compression of a Roman army by an African would remind Roman readers of nothing else than the disaster at Cannae, in which Hannibal executed an envelopment that left the vast majority of the Roman legions penned-in and unable to engage. Merli (2005) 115 sees similarities between Lucan's Curio episode and all of Hannibal's major victories in Livy, not just Cannae. On the historical level, Curio thus negates the victorious omen of Scipio as narrated by the *incola* by losing in a manner identical to Rome's greatest defeat in that same war.

[80] Bramble (1982) 552. Such vicious self-destruction is analogous to Ovid's Erysichthon at *Met*. 8.823-78, who after running out of external material to devour can only end by eating himself.

of the "core" in Antaeus, an aspect of the formula that will apply broadly to important figures on both sides of the conflict (chiefly Scaeva, the Nile, and Cato). Even though it ultimately fails to prevent Antaeus' defeat, it will prove to be a lasting and formidable characteristic of the cycle. In addition, Curio's defeat is the only major disaster for Caesar in the entire epic—at least before the conclusion of Book 10, in which Caesar finds himself in a similar situation to that of his unfortunate lieutenant. It may be instructive to recall this section there and to see how Curio failed to utilize the formula while Caesar ultimately succeeds (though only outside the text). Thus, Hercules' method of breaking the cycle should also be kept in mind as we examine ways in which Caesar's antagonists seek to undermine him.

In addition, Juba's "usurpation" of both Herculean and Antaean (i.e. Caesarian) paradigms also points the theme of dissolving boundaries in civil war in a new direction. If Caesar and Curio, as Romans, can be connected to Africa through the formula, the other direction may be just as valid, so that Juba, despite his African (and thus inherently deceitful) nature, can also stand on the right side because of his alignment with the republican cause and his adoption of Hercules' winning technique. This will have fundamental consequences for the way we view Cato in Book 9. In general terms, it foreshadows Cato's journey through Libya.[81] More specifically, does his march through the desert irreversibly devalue his uncompromising commitment to the forces of *libertas* by exposing him to African formulaic forces? Can he make use of these forces without being corrupted by their *furor*, or does he end up being both infested with *furor* while also failing to utilize the awesome power of the formula? These are questions that must

[81] Dick (1967) 240.

be confronted and answered if we are to comprehend the full significance of Africa as the ultimate source of formulaic energy.

Scaeva as Nexus

After Curio's debacle and failure to maintain the formula, Scaeva provides a stark contrast, for he is one of the most striking minor characters and perhaps the most successful embodiment of Caesarian *furor*. Thus, he has also been a relatively common topic of study in the literature; however, the focus has been primarily ethical and moral, namely that Scaeva's *virtus* is *nefas* because it takes place within civil war and contributes to tyranny, thus rendering him an unworthy *exemplum*.[82] I do not dispute the essence of this argument, but my focus is again, as in the previous sections, on the fluctuation between energy and exhaustion that powers Scaeva's *aristeia*, including the ambiguity of his exhaustion at the end of the episode.[83] In addition, Lucan's Scaeva also demonstrates the Caesarian core in a new form, one that will continue to cast an influential shadow up to the last book of the poem.

Scaeva's exploits form the highlight of the Dyrrhachium section, which takes up the first three hundred or so lines of Book 6.[84] The Dyrrhachium campaign is unique in Lucan in that only here do Pompey and his forces take on Caesarian characteristics (as will be seen in Chapter 5). This unusual situation occurs because the Caesarian forces

[82] Henderson (1987) 127 calls him "the archetypal warrior of the *Bellum Civile*" in his total devotion to Caesarian death. For individual studies of Scaeva, see Marti (1966), Saylor (1978), Leigh (1997) 158-90 and 243-46, and Hill (2004) 215-17.

[83] For the episode as an *aristeia*, see Henderson (1987) 126-29 and Johnson (1987) 57-60. Sklenář (2003) 48-49 sees this *aristeia* as generically distorted because it forces Homeric norms into a civil war (for example, on p.51 he notes the lack of single combat).

[84] For Lucan's possible, sources, see Marti (1966) 239-41 and Bonner (1966) 282-83.

have formed a ring around the town in order to prevent a possible escape by Pompey. Therefore, it is the Caesarian forces that are acting as the obstacle, thus turning the usual dynamics of the conflict on its head.

In analyzing this section, it should be kept in mind that Scaeva's exploits are preceded by Pompey's breakout (6.118-43), which Lucan describes in plainly formulaic terms. This is an unusual situation, to say the least. Scaeva's role is thus equally unique: he is forced to become a wall or obstacle, or, in other words, the opposite of normal cyclical behavior. However, he cannot shed his essentially Caesarian nature, and so the interplay between the two roles becomes the thematic focus of the scene.[85] Like Curio, Scaeva has had some of the Caesarian element usurped by the enemy, but unlike him, he will actually prove successful in neutralizing the threat. Accordingly, the passage begins with Pompey almost having succeeded in breaking through Caesar's fortifications, amid a mood of high optimism: *iam Pompeianae celsi super ardua valli / exierant aquilae, iam mundi iura patebant* ("now Pompey's eagles had passed over the heights of the lofty rampart, now world rule lay open to him," 6.138-39). Suddenly, a lone champion steps into the midst:

> *...quem non mille simul turmis nec Caesare toto*
> *auferret Fortuna locum victoribus unus*
> *eripuit vetuitque capi, seque arma tenente*
> *ac nondum strato Magnum vicisse negavit.*
> *Scaeva viro nomen…* (6.140-44)
>
> …a place which Fortune did not win with a thousand squadrons nor all of Caesar's forces one man seized from the victors and forbade to be taken, and as long as he held weapons and was not laid low, denied Magnus a victory. The man's name was Scaeva…

[85] Saylor (1978) views Scaeva's role as wall as representative of the entire vallation and countervallation of the Dyrrhachium episode; on p.250 he notes Scaeva's paradox as both wall and warrior.

This hyperbolic description, weighing as it does the strength of one hero (*viro*) against that of entire battalions and finding the latter wanting, is Lucan's sole example of the epic *aristeia*.[86] However, as with all else in the epic, Lucan quickly distorts this *topos*: *pronus ad omne nefas et qui nesciret in armis / quam magnum virtus crimen civilibus esset* ("ready for every abomination, and who did not know how great a crime valor was in civil war," 6.147-48). Since he is wholly devoted to *nefas*, Scaeva is the model Caesarian soldier.[87] His credentials established, let us examine a detail at lines 6.142-43: *seque arma tenente / ac nondum strato*. This ablative absolute, unremarkable at first glance, actually foreshadows Scaeva's condition at the end of the section, since it raises the possibility that after Scaeva succeeds in his mission of stopping Pompey, his survival is no longer necessary.

In fact, the issue of survival comes up right at the beginning of the narrative. Just as Caesar's army is looking Pompeian (*hic ubi quaerentis socios iam Marte relicto / tuta fugae cernit*, "when he sees his comrades seeking safety in flight and abandoning war," 6.150), Scaeva's words to his fellow soldiers are unmistakably Caesarian:

> *terga datis morti? cumulo vos desse virorum*
> *non pudet et bustis interque cadavera quaeri?*
> *non ira saltem, iuvenes, pietate remota*
> *stabitis? e cunctis, per quos erumperet hostis,*
> *nos sumus electi.* (6.153-57)
>
> Do you show your back to death? Are you not ashamed to not be included in that pile of men and not to be searched for among the pyres and corpses? Youths, will you not at least stand in rage, putting duty aside? Out of everyone through whom the enemy would break through, we are chosen.

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[86] Bramble (1982) 543.

[87] This is because, as Hardie (1993) 35 states, Scaeva stands in for Caesar here.

This statement alludes to the Book 1 lion simile. Scaeva is encouraging his comrades to face the enemy assault chest-first, just as the lion ran himself through the oncoming missile. In contrast to Curio's cavalry, which refrained from charging the enemy for fear of death, Scaeva relishes the opportunity for a suicide attack and demands it of his companions. Yet at the same time, *cumulo* indicates an immobility at odds with the dynamic nature of the formula.[88] Instead of force meeting force as in the lion simile, Scaeva focuses on the utility of their corpses: even if they fail to harm the enemy, at least after death they can serve as a barrier. He is thus merging the role of Caesarian soldier and Caesarian victim, as his putative corpse-heap is reminiscent of the mound of Sulla's victims at 2.201-06. The "contamination" of formulaic force with a dead obstacle—for Caesarian *ira* is the opposite of standing still (*stabitis*)—is important, because such confusion will come to the fore in the final lines of the epic as Caesar imagines Scaeva and Pompey facing each other in a stalemate, both simultaneously destructive forces and walls.

To this end, Scaeva's proclamation *confringite tela / pectoris impulsu iugulisque retundite ferrum* ("shatter their weapons with the impact of your chests and blunt their iron with your throats," 6.160-61), a classic example of subject-object inversion, is not simply rhetoric for its own sake nor a symbol of a topsy-turvy universe.[89] Scaeva seems to be shifting between wall-like immobility and the usual Caesarian forward thrust (*impulsu*).[90] There are two parallels of interest for this self-contradictory behavior. The

[88] Heaps and piles (*cumula/tumula*) are another important motif, describing both natural hills as well as piles of bodies and tombs; as is the tendency in Lucan, they bleed into each other: Henderson (1987) 129-30 demonstrates this in his insightful reading of Sulla's *tumulum* in Book 2.

[89] Hübner (1972) designates this reversal of subject-object relations as "hypallage."

[90] Leigh (1997) 220 notes the similarity here to the Book 1 lion simile in its suicidal frenzy.

first is Cato's own fantasy *aristeia* in Book 2, a disturbing connection which will be analyzed in closer detail later.[91] The second connection is to Lucan's rivers, which are not content to remain static in the face of Caesar's onslaughts, but rather attempt a more active type of resistance by striving to increase their waters to the point of flooding. Already we see Scaeva bringing up motifs and paradigms that will extend to the last book, and in both these cases, to opponents of Caesar.

Yet once Scaeva begins his *aristeia*, the barrier motif in his actions is much reduced. The reason for this is that he ends up being the only one fighting while the others watch, in contrast to his opening exhortations to the crowd (*mirantesque virum atque avidi spectare secuntur*, "they follow in awe at the man and are eager to watch," 6.167).[92] Thus, his actions at the beginning of the fight actually involve the destruction of piles and barriers: he stands on a *ruenti… / aggere* ("collapsing mound," 6.169-70) and tosses bodies at the incoming enemy (*primumque cadavera plenis / turribus evolvit subeuntisque obruit hostis / corporibus*, "and first he rolls down corpses from full turrets and crushes approaching enemies with bodies," 6.170-72) before moving on to the actual ruins of the walls themselves (*totaeque viro dant tela ruinae*, "and all the ruins give the man weapons," 6.172). Instead of preserving whatever portion of the barrier remains, he prefers to convert it to offensive use—a decision which is exactly the opposite of the "offensive wall" concept in his speech.

Interestingly, Scaeva's solitary "offensive defense" actually replenishes the corpses he expends: *ut primum cumulo crescente cadavera murum / admovere solo*

[91] Ahl (1976) 119 in fact calls Scaeva's behavior a "perversion of Stoic virtue and the Stoic quest for liberty in death."

[92] Conte (1988) 75 astutely notes that Scaeva must perform an *aristeia* only because his speech fails to rouse his fellow soldiers to his assistance. Leigh (1997) 184 views the result as a perversion of the *exemplum*-tale as seen in Valerius Maximus by turning the soldiers into distant spectators.

("when first the corpses leveled the wall with the ground as the pile grew," 6.180-81). It is almost as if, at this stage, the formula is represented for him in terms of bodies: he never runs out because the more he uses, the more he gains, just as the lightning bolt was able to recollect all of its own parts for future use. That is to say, his gathering of energy is realized visually as the amount of corpses amassed. When the corpses have thus been refilled to maximum level, at this point Scaeva is fully "recharged" and can begin his *aristeia* proper. Significantly, this leap is described in a simile nearly identical to that of the lion in Book 1: *non segnior extulit illum / saltus…quam per summa rapit celerem venabula pardum* ("no swifter leap carried him…than hurries the swift leopard along the top of the hunting-spears," 6.181-83).[93]

By leaping into the fray, Scaeva makes himself a universal target: *tunc densos inter cuneos compressus et omni / vallatus bello vincit, quem respicit, hostem* ("then, squeezed in among the dense formations and surrounded by the entire war, he vanquishes any enemy he sees," 6.184-85). *Compressus* is reminiscent of Curio's army, which ended up as a *compressum…cadaver* (4.787). Whereas compression failed to stimulate regeneration in that case, however, it brings out the best in Scaeva. Yet there are also troubling signs:

> *iamque hebes et crasso non asper sanguine mucro*
> [*percussum Scaevae frangit, non vulnerat, hostem;*]
> *perdidit ensis opus, frangit sine vulnere membra.* (6.186-88)
>
> And now [Scaeva's] sword-point, blunt with thick blood and no longer sharp [beats and breaks his enemy, not wounds him;] loses the function of a sword, breaking limbs with no wound.

[93] Leigh (1997) 218 n.69.

The exaggerated bluntness of his sword, presumably caused from already killing so many enemies on the fortifications, symbolically represents his formulaic energy level, which is wearing thin. Thus, Lucan perverts the *aristeia* formally as well, by having his hero tire out just when he begins to face the enemy in open battle. However, Scaeva displays a peculiar kind of battle prowess:

> *illum tota premit moles, illum omnia tela,*
> *nulla fuit non certa manus, non lancea felix;*
> *parque novum Fortuna videt concurrere, bellum*
> *atque virum.* (6.189-92)
>
> The whole weight of war presses on him, all weapons press him, no hand missed its mark, no lance was off target; Fortune sees a new pair engage—war and man.

Though Scaeva breaks free from his wall mode by jumping down into the fray, he still ends up being an immovable object against which all aggressive force is directed: Lucan even muses openly that only siege equipment could break him (6.198-201). However, as we will shortly see, even though he ends up being a barrier, he is still subject to the demands of the formula in terms of its cycle of exhaustion and regeneration.

Yet the reason Scaeva ultimately prevails is due to the following factor:

> *quid nunc, vaesani, iaculis levibusve sagittis*
> *perditis haesuros numquam vitalibus ictus?* (6.196-97)
>
> Why now, madmen, do you waste blows with javelins and light arrows that will never cling to his vitals?

This is Lucan's introduction of Scaeva's core, highlighted by *vitalibus* (repeated from 6.194). What sets it apart from Antaeus' is that Scaeva's core is inside himself and not a different entity: he is his own *Tellus*. Thus, it is more advantageous to him because the only way he can be severed from it is through its outright destruction. This is how Lucan

makes his hero superhuman, endowing him with such an unnaturally tough surface (hence the elephant simile below) that his weak spot is impenetrable. Thus, he cannot be brought down by any number of wounds, for they only affect his surface, not his core.

Nevertheless, the constant stress of being a barrier takes his toll on Scaeva: *iam gradibus fessis, in quem cadat, eligit hostem* ("now with tired steps he chooses an enemy on whom he may fall," 6.206).[94] He is nearing dormancy and must begin regeneration soon. To drive home the point, Lucan deploys a vivid simile:

> *sic Libycus densis elephans oppressus ab armis*
> *omne repercussum squalenti missile tergo*
> *frangit et haerentis mota cute discutit hastas:*
> *viscera tuta latent penitus, citraque cruorem*
> *confixae stant tela ferae: tot facta sagittis,*
> *tot iaculis unam non explent vulnera mortem.* (6.208-13)
>
> Thus a Libyan elephant, overwhelmed by a cloud of weapons, breaks every repelled missile on his rough back and shakes off the clinging spears by moving his skin: his guts stay safe, hiding deep inside, and the weapons stand short of the speared beast's blood: so many wounds caused by arrows and javelins do not add up to one death.

The poet chooses a fitting animal here: the elephant (a Libyan one, naturally) is well suited to describe the tottering yet still powerful Scaeva.[95] Scaeva's invulnerability is emphasized: the elephant's uniquely thick skin protects its core from all incoming missiles, thus rendering unharmed the dynamo that powers the beast so that it can wait for the right time to re-energize the organism.

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[94] This expression has an interesting parallel in Book 8, when Acoreus, debating whether to admit Pompey into Egypt, comments on his weakened state: *quaerit / cum qua gente cadat* (8.504-05). However, the similarity also highlights the contrast between Scaeva's successful regeneration and Pompey's permanent fall from power. In general, objects and entities collapsing under their own weight is a recurring motif, first seen at *in se magna ruunt* (1.81) in reference to the republic.

[95] Leigh (1997) 243-44 notes that Scaeva's similes refer to animals prevalent in the amphitheater, giving the whole episode a gladiatorial subtext.

However, regeneration does not occur all at once, but in fits and starts. The next twenty or so lines (6.214-39) are of great interest in that they describe a dormant phase stretched into two stages. The first begins when an arrow suddenly strikes Scaeva's eye. His reaction leaves no doubt as to the continued potency of his *furor*:

> *ille moras ferri nervorum et vincula rumpit*
> *affixam vellens oculo pendente sagittam*
> *intrepidus, telumque suo cum lumine calcat.* (6.217-19)
>
> He breaks the weapon's barrier and the binding of the tendons, boldly ripping the arrow stuck with hanging eyeball, and treads on the weapon along with his own eye.

Lucan's employment of the vocabulary of breakthrough (*moras…rumpit*) indicates that Scaeva is reawakening. Moreover, when we reflect on this passage in the context of the whole section, the arrow is also the first real example of external resistance Scaeva faces—resistance that, in terms of the formula, would actually activate regeneration. The difference between this particular missile and the whole forest already bristling in his back is that this is the first to have struck a vital area, thus penetrating beyond the surface. Hence, the sheer inhuman endurance and savagery of Scaeva's reaction, amounting to a mortification of the flesh as he tears out his own eyeball, is a genuine Caesarian reaction, recalling the Libyan lion of the Book 1 simile (Scaeva is *intrepidus* just as the lion was *securus*).

However, Scaeva is not truly regenerated yet:

> *ille tegens alta suppressum mente furorem,*
> *mitis et a vultu penitus virtute remota,*
> *'parcite', ait 'cives; procul hinc avertite ferrum.* (6.228-30)
>
> Covering his suppressed rage deep in his mind, mildly and with his courage deeply withdrawn from his features, he says, "Spare me, citizens; keep your weapons far away."

Here begins the second stage of Scaeva's regeneration, but these lines need to be parsed carefully. *Furorem* clearly shows that Scaeva is ready to rebound, but *alta suppressum mente* shows that his rage is not uncontrollable: he is deliberately concealing it (*tegens*) with a veil of mildness and conciliation (*mitis*), even addressing the Pompeians as *cives* with much sarcasm. In other words, he is in control of his own Caesarian processes, not yet allowing the *furor* to flow forth from his protected core, but holding it back for the right time.

Such calculated behavior under the most extreme circumstances, and in the service of repressing the utmost blind ferocity, brings a new dimension to the formula that will be the focus of Chapters 2 and 3: the realization that Caesar himself can voluntarily control certain aspects of the formula, either by concealing his *furor* under a mask of passivity or by switching to dormancy at will. This is an attitude of sophisticated deception, apparently at complete odds with the image of blind fury that Lucan promotes so memorably in the similes, but its interaction and blending with *furor* create new possibilities for the formula. Such deftness and craft mark Scaeva out as the most Caesarian of the minor characters by virtue of his being most like his general.[96]

The unfortunate Aunus is thus fooled by Scaeva's pleas of mercy in *simulatis…vocibus* (6.236); his only reward for his graciousness is a sword in the throat. Just as Antaeus deceived Hercules when he fell for the first time, so Scaeva tricks the hapless soldier into thinking that he was totally vanquished, when in fact the *furor* generated by his vitals burns as intensely as ever. In addition, the description of his

[96] As Gorman (2001) 278-79 points out, a kill accomplished through treachery makes a mockery of the idea of *aristeia*; however, this statement is also a good example of a conventional moral-ethical interpretation. The formula may corrupt, but it also brings forth new and interesting forms of behavior. Most importantly, it increases the chances of survival.

sword as *fulmineum* (6.239) alludes to the Caesarian thunderbolt of Book 1 and is thus a clear a sign as any that Scaeva has reached breakthrough stage. Lucan drives the formulaic emphasis home: *incaluit virtus, atque una caede refectus* ("his courage heated up, and refreshed by one kill," 6.240). Slaying Aunus revitalizes Scaeva even more and causes him to proclaim the formulaic creed for all to hear:[97]

> *an similem vestri segnemque ad fata putastis?*
> *Pompei vobis minor est causaeque senatus*
> *quam mihi mortis amor.* (6.244-46)
>
> Or do you think he is similar to you and slow to his fate? My love of death is greater than your love of Pompey and the senate's cause.

This is the self-denying recklessness of the lion and bolt similes, of overwhelming force no matter the chance of survival. At this fateful moment, reinforcements suddenly arrive: *simul haec effatur, et altus / Caesareas pulvis testator adesse cohortes* ("as soon as he says this, the dust piled high is witness that Caesar's cohorts are here," 6.246-47).[98] The sudden appearance of these troops has the effect of a *deus ex machina*.[99] Thus at this climactic moment, Scaeva is deprived of putting his suicidal commitment to the test.[100]

But if we remember Caesar's own words in Book 3, it is not the heat of battle that is truly harmful to a Caesarian, but its aftermath. Thus for Scaeva:

> *subducto qui Marte ruis; nam sanguine fuso*
> *vires pugna dabat. labentem turba suorum*
> *excipit atque umeris defectum imponere gaudet,*
> *ac velut inclusum perfosso in pectore numen*

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[97] Hershkowitz (1998) 215 remarks on the exhaustion and revitalization of Scaeva's *virtus/furor*.

[98] Caesar's sudden arrival seems to be Lucan's own invention. Besides the brief notice at Caes. *BC* 3.53, Plut. *Caes.* 16 has Scaeva saved by his own relatives, App. *BC* 2.60 has the other Caesarians come to his rescue, and Suet. *Div. Iul.* 68 is silent on the matter.

[99] Marti (1966) 245.

[100] Sklenář (2003) 57 argues that Caesar's sudden arrival is a result of Lucan's deliberate decision to deny a proper conclusion to Scaeva's *aristeia*.

> *et vivam magnae speciem Virtutis adorant;*
> *telaque confixis certant evellere membris,*
> *exornantque deos ac nudum pectore Martem*
> *armis, Scaeva, tuis…* (6.250-57)
>
> You collapse after battle is withdrawn; for fighting gave you strength when your blood was shed. The throng of your comrades receives you tottering and rejoices to place you, worn out, on its shoulders, and they worship as though there were a divinity enclosed in your perforated breast and a living image of great Courage; and they strive to tear out the weapons from your pierced limbs, and they adorn the gods and bare-chested Mars with your weapons, Scaeva…

The presence of supporting troops, and thus relief for Scaeva, in fact causes his general collapse: *nam sanguine fuso / vires pugna dabat* expresses the essence of the formula. The constant presence of enemies and missiles, no matter how exhausted they made Scaeva, at least recharged him constantly. Take resistance away, however, and exhaustion, which was equivalent to dormant phase in the formula and thus remained temporary, now comes dangerously close to permanent dissipation. Thus, both *labentem* and *defectum* suggest death instead of mere exhaustion.[101] Yet there is still hope in line 6.253. The *numen* dwelling within Scaeva should correspond to his core: that it is still intact (*inclusum*) bodes well for his long-term survival. Nevertheless, Lucan undercuts the optimism again with *ac velut*: the soldiers only assume that some mysterious power is lurking within, when there may actually be nothing.[102] In addition, *perfosso in pectore* implies that these wounds have gone deep enough to reach his core, even though Scaeva's wounds have previously only been skin deep.

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[101] *deficio OLD* 5 as "weaken" and 6 "die"; *labor OLD* 7a as "collapse" and 7c "die."

[102] Johnson (1987) 59 cleverly notes that *speciem* also suggests falseness. In formulaic terms, it adds to the uncertainty of the survival of his *virtus* as core.

The other sources are unanimous in their agreement on Scaeva's survival.[103] Therefore, Lucan's vagueness on the matter, however subtle, is of importance, as it indicates a deliberate intent to confuse the situation.[104] If there were hints of doubt in the case of Antaeus that were dispelled, they grow larger in Scaeva's case.[105] Has Scaeva truly consummated his *amor mortis* or not? Or is his collapse just for show while his *numen* silently recovers? It comes down to a choice between the outcomes of the lion and the thunderbolt. Though the narrator curses Scaeva's *virtus* as a tool of despotism (*infelix, quanta dominum virtute parasti!*, "unlucky one, with what courage did you prepare a master!," 6.262), the viability of its engine is what really counts in the end.[106]

Thus, we see that the Scaeva episode more fully develops themes that arise in the previous section. His fully internalized core (thus more effective than Antaeus') is the established model from this point forward, even appearing in an opponent of Caesar's such as the Nile. The core is a development of Caesarian dormancy into a constant center, not just an empty refuge to which the Caesarian entity retreats when spent—in other words, a sort of dynamo from which energy constantly emanates. In addition,

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[103] See n.96 above. Caesar glimpses Scaeva at the end of Book 10, though there is some doubt as to whether he actually sees him in the flesh or only mentally; the interpretation depends on one's rendering of *respexit* (10.543).

[104] D'Alessandro Behr (2007) 52 perceives that "there is something strange happening" at the end of the episode, referring to *velut* and *speciem*, but focuses, like previous commentators such as Leigh (1997) and Hershkowitz (1998), on the illusion of Scaeva's *virtus* in moral terms, whereas I view it in physical terms as a sign of the vagueness of his very survival.

[105] Henderson (1987) 127-29 discusses the importance of (*in*)*felicitas* in Lucan's portrayal of Scaeva, noting that Scaeva is *infelix* due to the myriad wounds he receives. He is also *infelix* according to the narrator at 6.262 because of his ignorance in fighting for the wrong cause, but he is also very much *felix* in surviving Lucan's hyperbolic *aristeia* (much like his master, who barely scrapes by against all odds: this is an issue in the Book 5 storm scene and, of course, dominates the last lines of Book 10).

[106] See Marti (1966) 254 on the perverse nature of Scaeva's *virtus*. However, by stripping the noun of its ethical content and emphasizing its employment for *nefas*, Lucan thus focuses on its purely martial sense (see Rutz (1960) 474), thus turning it into the mirror image of *furor*: so Hershkowitz (1998) 214.

Scaeva's status as both Caesarian and wall also parallels to a certain degree Cato's self-image in Book 2 as a receiver of all the wounds of civil war. Both these similarities complicate the image of Cato, especially as hailed by the narrator, as a paragon of virtue and *libertas*. How close must Cato's behavior be to Caesarian modes for the reader to say he is explicitly drawing on them?

Yet the Scaeva episode also has profound implications for Caesar as well, given that the general suddenly and unexpectedly turns to his centurion as he is hemmed in at the end of the epic. Scaeva's ultimate survival serves as a hopeful example for a similar escape by Caesar, but his precarious condition at the end of the episode (without definite signs of survival) at the same time casts a shadow on Caesar's prospects. For these reasons, Scaeva can be considered a nexus, a crossroads of divergent paths at the beginning of the second half of the epic. It is fitting, then, that this chapter began with the formula as ideal, moving slowly into its implementation in the real world through successive examples, and ending on the most real of the minor Caesarian characters before we come now to Caesar himself.

Chapter 2. Caesar and the Formula Part 1: Books 1-5

In the first chapter, we established the basic nature of the Caesarian formula and examined its operation in the most prominent minor characters. Turning now to Caesar himself, we find two innovations to the formula. The first is that Lucan describes Caesar's breakthroughs as resulting in a spreading out of his forces over a large area. This process is best compared to water, and thus I designate it with the terms "overflow" and "flooding." The advantage to this extension of the formula is that it does not just allow him to destroy his opponents, but also to expand and occupy both territory and, as shown in Book 3, political space. The implications are profound; for, as we will see in Chapter 4, Caesar's most prominent non-human opponents are bodies of water, especially rivers. Thus, Caesar is in a sense borrowing their paradigm for himself.

The second innovation is that, in addition to individual cycles of breakthrough and dormancy, there is also a long-range cycle operating over several books. In brief, Book 1 is devoted to a massive buildup of energy; when Caesar finally releases it, the force of his breakthrough is strong enough to silence Rome permanently. Because of his exertions, however, Caesar's large-scale formulaic arc reaches its low point in Book 5, which not coincidentally contains the two greatest threats to Caesar's mission before Book 10, the mutiny and the storm (the latter will be covered in Chapter 4). In both of these instances, Caesar faces danger alone, or, in other words, without the help of his army that is his instrument for carrying out the destructive nature of the formula (in the case of the mutiny, of course, his tool threatens to turn on him). This chapter will analyze

Caesar's behavior in the context of the formula in the first half of the epic, Books 1 to 5; the second half of the epic will be covered in the following chapter.

1. Caesar at the Rubicon

Lucan begins the action of his epic at Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon:

> *Iam gelidas Caesar cursu superaverat Alpis*
> *ingentisque animo motus bellumque futurum*
> *ceperat. ut ventum est parvi Rubiconis ad undas,*
> *ingens visa duci patriae trepidantis imago*
> *clara per obscuram vultu maestissima noctem*
> *turrigero canos effundens vertice crines*
> *caesarie lacera nudisque astare lacertis*
> *et gemitu permixta loqui: 'quo tenditis ultra?*
> *quo fertis mea signa, viri? si iure venitis,*
> *si cives, huc usque licet.' tum perculit horror*
> *membra ducis, riguere comae gressumque coercens*
> *languor in extrema tenuit vestigia ripa*. (1.183-94)
>
> And now Caesar had conquered the icy Alps with speed and had conceived enormous turmoil in his mind as well as the coming war. When he came to the waters of the little Rubicon, an immense image of his frightful motherland appeared to the leader; clear in the murky night, most mournful in aspect, pouring forth white hairs from her tower-wearing crown, standing with torn locks and naked shoulders, she spoke such words mingled with sobbing: "How much farther will you proceed? Men, where do you carry my standards? If you come by law as citizens, you are allowed up to this point." Then a shuddering struck the limbs of the general, his hairs stiffened, and sluggishness, checking his advance, held his steps on the very edge of the bank.

The last three lines are the chief concern here, since they describe one of the few instances in the entire epic in which Caesar shows any sign of hesitation.[1] Such a pause here is, of course, supremely dramatic and significant, as the Rubicon is the origin of civil

[1] Plut. *Caes.* 32 describes Caesar's hesitation in rather more deliberate terms, including a conversion with Asinius Pollio; Suet. *Iul.* 31 reports no such delay at the Rubicon, but instead a curious anecdote about Caesar getting lost on his way to the river (*diu errabundus*).

war and thus the point of no return. For a moment, Caesar shows a measure of doubt and remorse, a condition brought on by the pathetic figure of Roma.[2]

Or does he? Narducci makes the clever observation that the *horror* described here is deceptive, that what seems like dread is actually building up aggression in preparation to strike (hence the lion simile that Lucan links to this scene).[3] His reading thus drains Caesar of humanity, as the halting and hair-raising become mere physical reflexes instead of being motivated by *pietas*. Caesar's reaction would then be purely formulaic, as the presence of his first obstacle in the epic would induce a building-up of energy.

However, this conclusion discounts the presence of *languor*, which indicates that Caesar's energy does slacken here, and that he feels alarmed enough at his imminent moral and legal transgression to give a speech justifying his crossing: *ille erit ille nocens, qui me tibi fecerit hostem* ("he who makes me your enemy will be the guilty one," 1.203). Still, since Caesar does end up releasing his pent-up energy (*inde moras solvit belli*, "thus he dissolves the delays of war," 1.204), the loss of strength indicated by *languor* above seems merely temporary. More importantly, the fact that Caesar conceals his formulaic response with fine words is a perfect example of Caesarian dissimulation (as we saw in the case of Scaeva). In fact, one of the salient characteristics of the dormant phase is an appearance of weakness that conceals revitalization.

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[2] There is also an apparition at Suet. *Iul.* 32, but it is of a pastoral figure that does not speak to Caesar or his men.

[3] Narducci (2002) 200-03.

2. Caesar at Ariminum

Without further ado, Caesar rushes onward to invade Ariminum (modern-day Rimini), the first Italian town in his path; his assault is emphasized by a fitting simile:

> *sic fatus noctis tenebris rapit agmina ductor*
> *impiger, et torto Balearis verbere fundae*
> *ocior et missa Parthi post terga sagitta,*
> *vicinumque minax invadit Ariminum, et ignes*
> *solis Lucifero fugiebant astra relicto*. (1.228-32)
>
> Having thus spoken in the shadowy night, the swift general hastens his columns, and swifter than the twisted strap of a Balearic sling or an arrow which the Parthian releases behind his back, he menacingly invades nearby Ariminum; the stars (except Lucifer) were fleeing the sun's fire.

Not only do these two comparisons continue the association of Caesar with the barbarian other, but the Parthian arrow is doubly appropriate in that the physics of archery itself is a clear example of formulaic action (arguably much more than hand-to-hand fighting): drawing back the bow creates immense tension that must be released in an instant, thus propelling the arrow forward.

Also, the final line is the first example of a connection between Caesar and the sun (his connection to the element of fire has already been established by the bolt simile).[4] The stars are shown fleeing (*fugiebant*) the sun's fire, thus anticipating the behavior of Pompey and the residents of Rome. Though the clouds put up some resistance (*maestam tenuerunt nubila lucem*, "the clouds held up the mournful day," 1.235), the effect is dampened by Lucan's characteristic ambivalence as to whether there is actually a conscious purpose behind this phenomenon (*sed sponte deum, seu turbidus*

[4] Schönberger (1960) 82.

Auster / impulerat, "but whether by the will of the gods, or the turbulent south wind had driven it," 1.234-35), rendering the action devoid of meaning in the end.

3. Caesar's Formulaic Regeneration

Yet after subduing Ariminum, Caesar seems to lose steam:

> *Noctis gelidas lux solverat umbras:*
> *ecce, faces belli dubiaeque in proelia menti*
> *urguentes addunt stimulos cunctasque pudoris*
> *rumpunt fata moras: iustos Fortuna laborat*
> *esse ducis motus et causas invenit armis*. (1.261-65)
>
> Light had dissolved the night's frigid shadows: behold, to his doubtful mind fate adds the torches of war and the spurs urging him to battle, and bursts all the delays of shame: fortune contrives that the general's upheavals are just and finds reasons for war.

He hesitates due to capturing Ariminum without a fight, as well as the fact that he has already ordered his men to lay down their arms: *constitit ut capto iussus deponere miles / signa foro* ("as the soldiers halted, ordered to set down their standards in the captured forum," 1.236-37). Remarkably, even though Caesar has already renounced peace at 1.227, Lucan still describes him as reluctant to fight. The *mora* that Jamie Masters identified as such a fundamental counterweight to Caesar's relentless aggression turns out to be as much an internal as an external obstacle to Caesar.[5] Note *rumpunt fata moras*, however: fate is doing the work of Caesar himself earlier at the Rubicon, when he broke through that barrier. *Fatum* and *fortuna* in fact serve to assist the formula, or are part of

[5] Masters (1992) 3-10.

the formula itself: they are the traditional moral or ethical counterparts to the formula's mysterious power.[6]

Thus, Caesar's dormancy necessitates a giant formulaic build-up that lasts two hundred lines, which Lucan organizes as a chain of causation: first Curio persuades Caesar, who then tries to persuade the army; his failure to convince them then prompts Laelius to make a speech. This speech finally succeeds in rousing the entire army, thus leading to the catalogue of Caesar's troops and the completion of this large-scale recharge.

Curio finds Caesar still in stasis: *utque ducem varias volventem pectore curas / conspexit* ("and as he saw his leader turning various concerns in his heart," 1.272-73), a continuation of his hesitation at 1.262. The speech is rather short and to the point, but provides the needed formulaic boost:

> *dum trepidant nullo firmatae robore partes,*
> *tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratis*. (1.280-81)
>
> While the other side trembles, not strengthened by any solidity, do not hesitate: those who are prepared have always been injured by putting things off.

Just as Caesar himself will suggest in his Book 3 simile, Curio reminds his commander not to let the massed energy of the army dissipate any further from disuse.[7] However, this is also partly a rhetorical flourish meant for Caesar alone, for as Lucan described above, his army had already laid down its arms after occupying Ariminum. They are thus not strictly *parati*; it will take much more preparation to get them up to speed.

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[6] There is an extensive bibliography on these two concepts in Lucan: see e.g. Friedrich (1938) 405-11 and Dick (1967).

[7] The verb carries within itself the formulaic sense, since *differo* has the primary definition of "scatter" (*OLD* 1), and for Caesar, delay would result in scattering of his strength.

Curio's words do however have some effect on Caesar, as Lucan deploys another simile describing the general's reaction:

> *Sic postquam fatus, et ipsi*
> *in bellum prono tantum tamen addidit irae*
> *accenditque ducem, quantum clamore iuvatur*
> *Eleus sonipes, quamvis iam carcere clauso*
> *immineat foribus pronusque repagula laxet*.[8] (1.291-95)
>
> Thus after he spoke, nevertheless he inflamed his leader and added such anger to Caesar (who was already leaning toward war), as much as the Elean steed is helped by shouting, and though in his closed starting-cage he leans on the gates and loosens the bars.

Note the subtle change in Caesar's demeanor: even before Curio's speech his mind is already leaning toward action. The formula is again at work in the simile: the starting gate acts as a barrier that induces the horse's restless energy, which causes it to weaken the very barrier (*repagula laxet*). Yet this is all the horse can accomplish, for the fact that Caesar alone is energized is not enough: he must still activate his men, who are after all the real carriers of his destructive force. And they are certainly not battle-ready yet: Lucan describes them as a *trepidum…tumultum* whom Caesar must calm before making his speech.

Early in the speech, Caesar tries his hand at a simile:

> *non secus ingenti bellorum Roma tumultu*
> *concutitur quam si Poenus transcenderet Alpes*
> *Hannibal: implentur validae tirone cohortes,*
> *in classem cadit omne nemus, terraque marique*
> *iussus Caesar agi.* (1.303-07)
>
> Rome is shaken by the enormous turmoil of war, no differently than if Phoenician Hannibal were to cross the Alps: the strong cohorts are filled with fresh recruits, every grove is felled to make the fleet, and Caesar is ordered to be driven about on land and sea.

[8] Getty (1940) 67 and Roche (2009) 242 take *in bellum* with *prono*, which has the sense of "inclining towards" (*OLD* 6).

The comparison to Hannibal is ironic because Caesar wants to emphasize the Romans' excessive fear, as though their greatest historical enemy had come to the gates again. However, this comparison is also fundamentally true, because, as we have seen in Chapter 1, Caesarian figures are intimately connected with Libya because its vital forces power the formula. Moreover, since this is the first indication of the Romans' emotional state, Caesar can have his cake and eat it too: as we will see, he will take Rome without a fight because of how frightened they are at this *alter Hannibal*, but he will also manage to break through formulaically, like a true heir to Africa.

Yet the rest of Caesar's speech is stunningly ineffective as a means of stoking up *furor*. His rhetorical strategy is to make Pompey look like the bloodthirsty beast that he himself really is; this is because he is still thinking of the conflict in ethical and legal terms, of *fas* and *ius*, in order to make his cause appear in the right. Thus Caesar is forced to use terms that are really the opposite of his goals. He complains of Pompey's predominance thus: *quem tamen inveniet tam longa potentia finem? / quis scelerum modus est?* ("Yet what end will such long domination find? What limit is there of crime?" 1.333-34). These rhetorical questions, especially the second, are of the same type as the narrator's cries on the futility of civil war: *quis furor, o cives, quae tanta licentia ferri?* ("What madness, citizens, what great immoderation of the sword?" 1.8). These lines are an example of rhetorical skill on Caesar's part: he is effectively stealing the narrative persona of a horrified bystander in order to mask his own future crimes. Thus, Caesar is voluntarily distorting the formula by hiding it under an innocent, even outraged mask.

His performance falls flat, however, because Caesar misjudges his audience. In fact, for much of the middle of his speech, he seems to be addressing Pompey (e.g. *ille tuus…Sulla*, 1.335). He would understandably wish to portray himself in the best possible light if he were his true audience, but it is in fact a very different one indeed. Instead, words like *finis* and *modus* have the opposite effect: they psychologically dam up Caesarian energy and *furor* in his men. Even worse, Caesar starts playing up the age of his men in order to gain sympathy (which again would only make sense if he were addressing an imaginary Pompey):

> *conferet exanguis quo se post bella senectus?*
> *quae sedes erit emeritis? quae rura dabuntur*
> *quae noster veteranus aret, quae moenia fessis?*[9] (1.343-45)
>
> Where will their exhausted old age take them after war? What rest will there be for the discharged? What fields will be at hand which our veteran may till, what walls for the weary?

Such sentiments, together with *finis* and *modus*, are characteristic of an army at the end of a campaign, not at its beginning. Note *exanguis*: if Antaeus showed (and Laelius will show) that blood is a carrier of formulaic energy, then Caesar's army has completely run out of said energy. Technically, this is true: his legions have just completed a grand cyclical arc by subduing Gaul, and now he must regenerate them to start another cycle for civil war. However, Caesar's strange communing with an imaginary Pompey forces him to voice this concern aloud in imaginary justification of his coming actions. This is certainly the wrong language for Caesar to use in front of the common soldier.

Moreover, his army's weakness turns out to be an illusion, as Caesar himself admits just a few lines later: *viribus utendum est quas fecimus* ("we must utilize the

[9] Ahl (1976) 202 notes the similarity of these lines to *Aen*. 3.85-89 (especially *da moenia fessis* at *Aen*. 3.85). This allusion, however, can only be in ironic contrast, as Caesar has no intention of rest.

strength that we have built up," 1.348). Instead of exhausting them, it turns out that ten years of hard campaigning in Gaul have built his men into such a formidable force that, as Curio warns him, the army must be unleashed soon lest its energy dissipate. There are two reasons for this rhetorical about-face. The first has to do with the formula: like Scaeva, Caesar knows the value of concealing one's true strength in order to deceive the enemy. Second, Caesar has switched audiences: the defeatist lines above were followed by a vocative *Magne*, showing that he was still speaking to an imaginary Pompey and thus pretending to have the intention to disband his army. On the other hand, line 1.348 is preceded by *tollite signa* (1.347), showing that Caesar redirects his attention back to the actual audience and is now using the correct language in *tollite* (note *tolle moras* in Curio's speech).

However, Caesar's return to directly addressing his men is too late to cause a decisive change:

> *Dixerat; at dubium non claro murmure vulgus*
> *secum incerta fremit. pietas patriique penates*
> *quamquam caede feras mentes animosque tumentes*
> *frangunt; sed diro ferri revocantur amore*
> *ductorisque metu*. (1.352-56)
>
> Thus he spoke, but the hesitant crowd mutters indistinctly with unclear murmuring. Their minds (though fierce with slaughter) and their swelling spirits are broken by patriotism and the ancestral gods, but they are recalled by dreadful love of the sword and fear of their leader.

Even though the men are already energized, their innate morality still struggles against their irrational desire. Thus, Laelius' speech is needed to overcome their moral scruples once and for all. It is supremely ironic that Lucan introduces Laelius as a soldier who has earned the *corona civica* for saving a fellow citizen (1.356-58), given the content of his

speech.[10] He is in fact the first of Caesar's fanatical followers, followed by Vulteius in Book 4 and Scaeva in Book 6.[11] Far from preserving his fellow *cives*, Laelius declares that any enemy of Caesar's is no *civis* (1.373-74) and that he is ready to override his instinct and slaughter his entire family at his commander's whim (1.376-78).[12] It is no wonder that Laelius declares a wish to *veras expromere voces* ("express his true voice," 1.360), since his speech represents the beating heart of the formula, thus showing all of Caesar's pious justifications to be as deceitful as Scaeva's speech before he lures Aunus to his death.

Being a part of the Caesarian formula means above all possessing physical readiness: *dum movet haec calidus spirantia corpora sanguis…degenerem patiere togam regnumque senatus?* ("while hot blood moves these breathing bodies…will you put up with the degenerate toga and the despotism of the Senate?" 1.363-65). As we saw in the Antaeus episode, blood is the physiological carrier of Caesarian *furor*. In fact, Laelius' blood is so fervid that he dreams of grander victories:

> *usque adeo miserum est civili vincere bello?*
> *duc age per Scythiae populos, per inhospita Syrtis*
> *litora, per calidas Libyae sitientis harenas:*
> *haec manus, ut victum post terga relinqueret orbem,*
> *Oceani tumidas remo compescuit undas*
> *fregit et Arctoo spumantem vertice Rhenum:*
> *iussa sequi tam posse mihi quam velle necesse est.* (1.366-72)
>
> Is it still wretched to conquer in civil war? Then lead us through the peoples of Scythia, through the inhospitable shores of the Syrtes, through the burning sands of parched Libya: this band, that it might leave a conquered world behind its back, has tamed with oars the swelling waters

[10] Ahl (1976) 201, George (1988) 337-38, Roche (2009) 264.

[11] Leigh (1997) 204.

[12] George (1988) 337 calls Laelius "an extension of Caesar's will," or a Stoic ἡγεμονικόν. This concept of Caesar as the central, controlling mind of his army is analogous to his role as core, which he will argue in Book 5 is his rightful position, in opposition to the mutineers.

> of Ocean and has broken the Rhine with its foaming Northern eddies: for me the ability to follow orders is as necessary as the desire.

These lines are dense with implications. First of all Laelius is pointedly contradicting the narrator at 1.13-23, who sees war in terms of a trade-off: civil war can only come at the expense of foreign conquest. Laelius, on the other hand, thinks Caesar can have it all, that external wars not only can, but must necessarily follow in the wake of a victory in civil war. In the process, of course, he obliterates the ethical distinction between foreign and civil war, for a victory in the latter won the general no triumph.[13] This is of no account to Laelius, however, who gleefully talks about slaughtering kin at the end of the speech, if only Caesar should command it.[14] Such mindless devotion is also seen from his reference to Caesar's crossing of the Rhine and invasion of Britain: to him, civil war is merely an interlude between past and future foreign conquests.[15] Finally, though line 1.372 may seem superfluous, is important in the context of the formula, since it is there that Laelius again stresses his physiological ability to achieve all these conquests, thus showing that the army's energy is still intact and ready to be unleashed.

Second, it is no coincidence that Laelius' areas for future campaigns are precisely Cato's destinations in Book 9 as well as Pompey's potential destination in Book 8 if he had succeeded in gaining help from the Parthians.[16] Such close foreshadowing shows

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[13] As Lucan himself states at 1.12; cf. Val. Max. 2.8.7. See also Beard (2007) 123-24. For a general study on the triumph, see Versnel (1970).

[14] As Ahl (1976) 200 observes, Caesar's "peculiar power…is that he is fighting for himself; he is both leader and cause, as Pompey and Cato are not." Thus, the morality of his soldiers' actions is irrelevant.

[15] Leigh (1997) 205-06 mentions parallels to Laelius' loyalty in the poetry of Catullus and Horace as well as in elegy; in fact, he calls him an ἐραστής of Caesar. For the influence of Latin love-poetry on Caesar's relationship to his men in Book 5, see Matthews (2008) 15-17 and *passim*; she elaborates on this argument in a recent article (2011).

[16] Roche (2009) 268.

that, conceptually, even a centurion in Caesar's army can already mentally anticipate the escape routes of the Pompeians after they lose at Pharsalus. There is no place in the world safe from Caesar's reach. Laelius thus offers a faint outline of what will be called the "overflow" extension of the formula.

Finally, Laelius' mention of Ocean and Rhine is significant: ever since the crossing of the Rubicon, Caesar's main non-human barriers or "opponents" are bodies of water, especially rivers (as will be seen in Chapter 4). Laelius uses *compescuit* and *fregit*, violent verbs of domination that are needed to counteract the rivers' resistance, as seen in *tumidum* and *spumantem*. Appropriately for one so eager to start civil war, Laelius elides the difference between the conquest of foreign rivers and of Rome's own: *me iubeas…castra super Tusci si ponere Thybridis undas, / Hesperios audax veniam metator in agros* ("if you bid me pitch camp over the waters of Tuscan Tiber, I will boldly come into Hesperian fields to mark out the lines," 1.377-82): *super* is more idiomatically translated "nearby," but the literal meaning better conveys the sense of domination.

Only a speech such as this succeeds in finally rousing the army (1.386-87). The absolute loyalty of men such as Laelius is the secret to Caesar's success and the crucial factor separating him from Pompey and Cato. The first speech of each of the three main characters meets with doubt and hesitation from the audience, but only Caesar has the advantage of having a true believer, who, like Scaeva, has totally internalized the Caesarian trait of indiscriminate slaughter. In addition, the success of his own suppression of his morality serves as a tipping point to sweep the rest of the army along. In other words, Laelius is an *exemplum* of *nefas*.

Now that all the parts of the Caesarian machine have been aligned, the true physical regeneration of the catalogue can proceed:[17]

> *Caesar, ut acceptum tam prono milite bellum*
> *fataque ferre videt, ne quo languore moretur*
> *fortunam, sparsas per Gallica rura cohortes*
> *evocat et Romam motis petit undique signis*. (1.392-95)
>
> As Caesar sees that his soldiers are so inclined to accept war and fate carrying them onwards, lest he delay fortune with further sluggishness, he summons his cohorts scattered through the Gallic countryside and aims for Rome, his standards everywhere set in motion.

Thus we have *sparsas*, one of the core thematic words of the formula, alluding to *sparsos…ignes* of the bolt simile. Like the lightning bolt, Caesar is now going to recall all his scattered forces and concentrate them into a cohesive force that is ready to expend its energies. *Languore* is especially fitting here, as it echoes the *languor* back in line 1.194 that momentarily took hold of Caesar when he saw the vision of *Roma*. Delay has now been decisively banished; there will be no barrier that prevents the cycle from moving toward consolidation. The gathering is greater than that of the previous cycle, however, since instead of just the forces that crossed the Rubicon with him, Caesar is now drawing upon the cohorts that are still in Gallic territory at this point in time.

4. Caesar's Formulaic Flooding: A New Paradigm

This is the result of the large-scale process of concentration we have observed over the last two hundred lines:

> *Caesar, ut immensae collecto robore vires*
> *audendi maiora fidem fecere, per omnem*

[17] Masters (1992) 4 views the catalogue as yet another delay to Caesar's destructive progress; I take his point, but see this delay as integral to the whole cyclical process of the formula, since, to argue on Masters' own terms, it is a textual embodiment of the colossal recharging that Caesar needs to undergo before he can unleash an equally colossal energy upon Italy that will enable him to subdue Rome without a battle.

> *spargitur Italiam vicinaque moenia complet.* (1.466-68)
>
> As his enormous forces in their gathered strength gave him confidence to dare greater things, Caesar spreads himself through all of Italy and fills up the nearby walls.

Lucan could not be clearer in announcing the presence of the formula: *collecto* and *spargitur* are both echoes of the two most important verbs associated with the Caesarian cycle. Predictably, the concentration of energy leads to its diffusion. Yet the result is not exactly the same as what occurred after he had taken Ariminum, which was a simple loss of energy. *Complet* is the key word here: instead of merely shattering as the bolt did, Caesar still has enough substance and force post-scattering to pervade an entire area. The addition of the concept of filling thus subtly changes the connotation of *spargo*: rather than simply indicating fragmentation as it did in the bolt simile, it also suggests the idea of permeation expressed by *complet*.

There are multiple implications to this new paradigm. First, it allows Lucan to link the idea of permeation with the political implications of Caesar's domination, the summation of which is *omnia Caesar erat* (3.108).[18] This statement appears in the context of Caesar's occupation of Rome and usurpation of the normal Republican magistracies. Such pervading of the entire political sphere is only made possible by the filling up of physical space due to his military presence. As the epic proceeds and Caesar gradually dominates the entire Roman world, thus pushing the republicans more and more into the margins, the need to find alternate spaces just to ensure survival (much less their own expansion) will become a pressing issue for Pompey and Cato; the narrator will play a central role in these efforts. In fact, one can view the progress of the narrative up

[18] See Hardie (1993) 7-8.

to and including the Battle of Pharsalus as one giant, gradual Caesarian spreading over the entire *imperium Romanum*. No matter how many times Caesar individually may complete cycles or stumble, his overall permeation of the world is unstoppable, at least until Book 10.

Second, Caesar's permeation gives him unmistakably aquatic properties: spreading over an area is essentially the same process as flooding it.[19] This extension of the formula has profound implications, since (as will be seen in Chapter 4) water, especially in the form of rivers, is Caesar's most prominent natural enemy. If Caesar already commands the destructive power of fire and lightning, what does it say about him that he tries to usurp the dynamics of the opposite element for himself? For what the aquatic or river paradigm gives Caesar is an enormously increased flexibility: his power does not end simply after the initial explosion, but continues for some time. This fits perfectly into the political sphere of *omnia Caesar erat*: Caesar's outward explosion destroys the old order, while his subsequent flooding creates a new order as his power and authority permeate the resulting vacuum.

However, the flooding paradigm is also subject to weakness: no matter how great the initial force of the overflow, eventually the water will lose momentum and finally stop flowing. In a sense, this fits into Caesar's Book 3 simile: the absence of new enemies or obstacles will cause his energy to drain away. Yet he has a safeguard against this eventuality. If we examine lines 1.466-68 again, Lucan actually describes Caesar proceeding from concentration to permeation without an actual breakthrough. There is no barrier like the Rubicon or Ariminum that he encounters this time before spreading out

[19] Green (1991) 246 identifies *spargere* and *complere* as verbs of flooding. In a sense, the rivers referenced in the catalogue (1.396-419) foreshadow Caesar's climactic breakthrough as an overflowing river; see Green (1991) 245.

into the Italian countryside. This is worth considering carefully: is it possible that Caesar can take control of the formulaic process to such an extent that he can switch between concentration and dissipation at will? This would be the most drastic voluntary deformation of the formula yet, much more so than Scaeva's temporary delays.[20]

The news of Caesar's imminent arrival at Rome has a shocking effect on its populace:

> *vana quoque ad veros accessit fama timores*
> *irrupitque animos populi clademque futuram*
> *intulit…* (1.469-71)
>
> Empty rumor also added to genuine fear and burst into the minds of the people and introduced the coming calamity…

Roche quotes parallels for *irrupit animos*, but the violence of the expression makes it more than just a common figure of speech here: it describes Caesar's *fama* as being formulaic, inasmuch as *rumpo* is a formulaic verb (recall *rumpunt fata moras* at 1.264).[21] Now let us consider the response of the citizens of Rome:

> *nec qualem meminere vident: maiorque ferusque*

[20] A passage later in Book 1 is relevant to this issue. As Caesar sweeps down the length of Italy, Lucan presents a catalogue of omens that presage his advance. One of the most striking is an image of celestial fire: *et varias ignis denso dedit aere formas, / nunc iaculum longo, nunc sparso lumine lampas* ("and fire produced various shapes in the thick air: now a spear with long light, now a torch with diffuse light," 1.531-32). An interesting feature of this omen is that it not only takes the shape of a spear (*iaculum*) with a shaft-like beam (*longo…lumine*), but also a shapeless glow (*sparso lumine*). We have already seen that Caesar can behave not only as a penetrating force that shatters boundaries, but that once he breaks through, the resulting flood carries everything with it. The alternating forms of the fire would seem to describe this phenomenon: Henderson's (1987) 141 description of the cataclysmic simile at 1.72-80 as "wave/particle indeterminacy" is apt here. Thus, the *sparsum lumen* would represent the spreading of the "explosion" of the concentrated *lumen*. Getty (1940) 100 mentions Sen. *NQ* 7.21.1, which describes comets, in connection with this passage, though Roche (2009) 323 sees this omen as different types of lightning (Lucan had already mentioned comets at 1.529). The famous *sidus Iulium* of 44 BC that appeared during Octavian's celebrations of the *ludi Victoriae Caesaris* was, of course, a comet.

[21] Roche (2009) 302.

> *mentibus occurrit victoque immanior hoste*. (1.479-80)
>
> Nor do they see him as they remember him: greater and wilder he appears in their minds, and more monstrous than his conquered foe.

Caesar grows larger in their minds, his strength augmented by the defeated barbarian enemy. Even though Gaul does not possess the natural regenerative properties of Africa, the Romans believe he has taken on its inhabitants' strength as well. More importantly, there seems to be a connection between the physical spreading of Caesar's army through the Italian countryside with the mental expansion of his reputation in the minds of the frightened Romans, which in turn prompts them to flee without attempting to defend the city. In other words, Caesar's breakout and flooding results not so much in a loss of energy as it causes a shifting of that energy from physical destruction to mental intimidation as his image expands in the minds of the Romans.[22] *Vident* is nicely ambiguous, as the Roman people think they actually *see* a different Caesar, even though this "Caesar" turns out to be a figment of their imagination (*nulloque auctore malorum / quae finxere timent*, "and there being no author of evils, they fear those that they imagine," 1.485-86). His physical breakthrough thus correlates to mental breakthrough (*irrupit*), bringing with it mental invasion (*intulit*). In other words, Caesar's physical flooding distorts the perception of the Romans' minds, which then causes a mental "flooding."

Following the panic at Rome, Lucan halts the narrative for over six hundred lines while he inserts various digressions on the fallout of Caesar's arrival, including assorted

[22] However, Gowing (2005) 83 notes that Caesar does prove to be worse than imagined, thus giving 1.479-80 an ironic touch.

omens, vignettes on soothsayers, an analepsis on the Marian and Sullan civil wars, and finally the introduction of Cato. By the time Caesar reappears after such a lengthy interruption, another character sketch is needed to refresh the reader:

> *Caesar in arma furens nullas nisi sanguine fuso*
> *gaudet habere vias, quod non terat hoste vacantis*
> *Hesperiae fines vacuosque irrumpat in agros*
> *atque ipsum non perdat iter consertaque bellis*
> *bella gerat. non tam portas intrare patentis*
> *quam fregisse iuvat, nec tam patiente colono*
> *arva premi quam si ferro populetur et igni.*
> *concessa pudet ire via civemque videri.* (2.439-46)
>
> Caesar, raging into war, rejoices to have no paths except in bloodshed, and because he crushes the boundaries of Hesperia that are not lacking enemies, and bursts into fields that are not empty, and does not waste the journey itself and wages wars upon wars. It does not please him to enter open gates so much as to break them, nor to tread the fields with a farmer's permission as much as if he lays them waste with fire and sword. He is ashamed to go by a permitted path and seem like a citizen.

This summary is essentially a restatement of the original sketch of Caesar at 1.143-50: nowhere is Caesar's megalomania and *furor* for destruction more vividly stated, making him, as Lucan states in line 2.446, the anti-citizen *par excellence*. There are subtle points of detail picked up from the intervening formulaic developments, however. For example, even though *fines* is best rendered "territory," the literal definition underlines Caesar's obsession with erasing boundaries, just as the entire group of *quod* clauses expresses his love, or rather need, for enemies to destroy (the central characteristic of the formula). *Non…iuvat* simply states Caesar's pathological desire to destroy more openly. As we have seen, however, it is not just a matter of enjoyment, but of biological necessity that Caesar must destroy, so as to keep his energy going and not dissipate.

The most important new detail, though, is contained in *vacuosque irrumpat in agros*. Again, we have a motivic verb in *irrumpo*. Its usage here is not only in the simple

sense to burst (such as *rumpunt fata moras* earlier), but in connection with 1.466-68 earlier.[23] That the fields are not empty, but filled with potential obstacles, induces his formulaic overflow and flooding, and after destroying them, Caesar will fill the vacuum with himself (again foreshadowing his political usurpation in Book 3). Furthermore, Lucan also used *irrumpo* to describe Caesar's *fama* invading the minds of the Romans, a mental "flooding" that followed directly upon his physical flooding. Thus, in this second sketch of Caesar, Lucan clearly indicates how important the overflow and flooding paradigm is to the formula. Comparing Caesar's sweep down Italy to a raging torrent is Lucan's explanation for how quickly Caesar was able to dominate the peninsula with such little resistance.[24] Even towns that wish to mount some form of opposition eventually capitulate without a fight: *facilis sed vertere mentes / terror erat, dubiamque fidem Fortuna ferebat* ("but terror easily changed their minds, and fortune carried off their doubtful loyalty," 2.460-61). Only Corfinium, commanded by the staunchly anti-Caesarian Domitius, will actually resist: the circumstances surrounding its defense will be discussed in Chapter 4.

After Pompey settles down at Brundisium, making his first appearance in the narrative proper, Lucan returns to Caesar:

> *At numquam patiens pacis longaeque quietis*
> *armorum, ne quid fatis mutare liceret,*
> *assequitur generique premit vestigia Caesar.*
> *sufficerent aliis primo tot moenia cursu*
> *rapta, tot oppressae depulsis hostibus arces,*

[23] Fantham (1992a) 164-65 notes that this sketch is a direct resumption of 1.466-68; she also observes the similarity between this character sketch and that preceding the Book 1 lightning simile.

[24] His swiftness is summed up in Cicero's exclamation *o celeritatem incredibilem!* ("what incredible speed!" *Att.* 7.22.1), written in early 49 BC while Caesar was sweeping down Italy. For other such remarks by Cicero, see Gelzer (1968) 272 n.1.

> *ipsa, caput mundi, bellorum maxima merces,*
> *Roma capi facilis; sed Caesar in omnia praeceps,*
> *nil actum credens cum quid superesset agendum,*
> *instat atrox et adhuc, quamvis possederit omnem*
> *Italiam, extremo sedeat quod litore Magnus,*
> *communem tamen esse dolet…* (2.650-60)
>
> But Caesar, never tolerant of peace and a long reprieve from arms (lest the fates be allowed to alter anything), pursues his son-in-law and follows hard upon his tracks. For others, so many walls captured in first march and so many subdued citadels with the enemy overthrown would suffice—even the head of the world, the greatest prize of war, Rome, easy to be captured; but Caesar, rushing headlong into everything, believing nothing done when something remained to be done, presses fiercely onward and, although he possesses all of Italy, it pains him still that it is shared because Pompey sits on the edge of the shore…

Now that Pompey has formally declared *fuga* as his strategy, Caesar's goal is to prevent his escape by any means possible. Thus, incredibly, he chooses not to occupy Rome even though the city is obviously the capital of the empire (*caput mundi*) and has economic value of the first order (*bellorum maxima merces*). There could be no clearer indication that Lucan's Caesar is not driven by material wealth or temporal power, but an insatiable, instinctive drive to kill. Thus, Rome, being easy to take (*capi facilis*), poses no immediate interest for Caesar: he needs a confrontation according to the demands of the formula.

This passage also introduces a motif whose importance will only come to light gradually, and mostly in the later books of the epic, namely the *caput* as object of Caesar's desire. Here, we see that Caesar does not want a figurative head, but Pompey's actual head. After his death and decapitation, *caput* as a signifier will continue to haunt the text, floating around until it finds a suitable object in the Nile's source, which will replace Pompey's *caput* as Caesar's main goal.

Finally, Caesar's begrudging Pompey even an inch of Italian soil is not mere hyperbole (not to mention illogical, since Pompey does not actually want to remain in Italy), but necessarily follows on the flooding extension of the formula. If Caesar is an overflowing river, he must and will spread until he covers all available land.

5. Caesar's Dissembling and the Destruction of Rome's Core

We next meet Caesar at the beginning of Book 3:

> *Caesar, ut emissas venti rapuere carinas,*
> *absconditque fretum classes, et litore solus*
> *dux stetit Hesperio, non illum gloria pulsi*
> *laetificat Magni: queritur quod tuta per aequor*
> *terga ferant hostes. neque enim iam sufficit ulla*
> *praecipiti fortuna viro, nec vincere tanti,*
> *ut bellum differret, erat. tum pectore curas*
> *expulit armorum pacique intentus agebat*
> *quoque modo vanos populi conciret amores,*
> *gnarus et irarum causas et summa favoris*
> *annona momenta trahi*. (3.46-56)
>
> As the winds carried off the launched ships and the strait concealed the fleet, and the general alone stood on the Hesperian shore, the glory of Magnus defeated does not gladden him: he complains that the enemy retreats safely over the sea. For no fortune was now enough for the impetuous man, nor was victory of such value that he should delay the war. He then drove away care of war from his breast and, intent on peace, set about how he might summon the fleeting love of the people, knowing that both cause for anger and the greatest alterations of favor are influenced by grain.

By now, we are used to the description of Caesar as impatient and eager for action. In formulaic terms, he is dissatisfied because, unlike a normal general, who would presumably be glad at having driven Pompey out of Italy, Caesar craves continual strife. *Vincere* is ironic, for Pompey's retreat is no "true" victory in the formulaic sense, since there has been no battle and thus no energy has been released; as Caesar himself will

admit at Massilia, he needs enemies on which to unleash his *furor* lest it dissipate. Possessing Italy may mean that Caesar wins by default, but because war for him means above all an enemy or obstacle to crush, he must seek one in the immediate vicinity.

Yet immediately after this, Caesar banishes all warlike thoughts and heads back to Rome, thus apparently contradicting the *sententia* at 3.51-52. However, as Lucan explains, the general has not suddenly become a pacifist: what he wants is to gain the loyalty of the population through control of the grain supply and presumably an increase in the dole. In other words, Caesar is engaging in psychological warfare in order to win Rome over without a fight. He may have abandoned violence for now, but not the intention to conquer.[25] Indeed, Lucan soon gives the reader reason to doubt Caesar's sincerity:

> *Haec ubi sunt provisa duci, tunc agmina victor*
> *non armata trahens sed pacis habentia vultum*
> *tecta petit patriae*. (3.71-73)
>
> When the general took care of this matter, then, as victor, leading squadrons not armed but bearing the appearance of peace, he aims for the houses of his own country.

Caesar's legions, mirroring their leader (as always), outwardly come in peace, but *vultum* reveals the truth. As we saw with Scaeva, Caesarian figures can be masters of deception; in fact, outer calm combined with inner accumulation of strength is precisely the description of the dormant phase.[26] Caesar is thus extending Scaeva's brief repression of *furor* on to a larger timescale. In effect, we can view his present dormancy as the result of the "expulsion" of his excess energy that he built up while pursuing Pompey and

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[25] Coffee (2009) 136, 145 notes Caesar's deliberate self-control in achieving his goals.

[26] Lucan implicitly contrasts this deceptive face with the legitimate appearance that Caesar could present if he were to return in full triumph with a parade of conquered Gauls: *quas potuit belli facies!* (3.76).

which he did not get to expend in an actual battle. Being temporarily dormant, Caesar must go for the indirect approach, seeking to dominate by stealth: obviously the plethora of actual opportunities for battle in the epic means that he rarely uses subterfuge, but it will grow increasingly important for him after Pharsalus.

However, Lucan drops the grain issue immediately; he indicates that the Romans are afraid of Caesar, but for an unknown reason (3.80-82). When he enters Rome itself, we find that Caesar has already ensured submission to his will because the terrified citizens of Rome think he will behave more monstrously than he in fact does:

> *Sic fatur et urbem*
> *attonitam terrore subit. namque ignibus atris*
> *creditur, ut captae, rapturus moenia Romae*
> *sparsurusque deos. fuit haec mensura timoris:*
> *velle putant quodcumque potest*. (3.97-101)
>
> Thus he speaks and enters the city, which is struck dumb with fear. For it is believed that he would ravage the walls of Rome with black fire as though it were a captured city and scatter the gods. This was the extent of their fear: they think he desires whatever he is capable of doing.

Without laying a hand on anyone or anything, Caesar thus obtains their submission anyway. Again, as in Book 1, Caesar has not only physically occupied the city, but has taken over the minds of its residents as well: *vix odisse vacat* ("there is hardly room to hate," 3.103) does not just mean "occasion" in a general sense, but that there is literally no room in their minds for hatred of Caesar, since his terrifying reputation has occupied all their mental space. As we will see in Chapter 5, the silence and helplessness of those conquered by Caesar is a constant theme throughout the early books. Accordingly, Lucan describes the remaining senators coming out of hiding like frightened animals: *turba patrum…e latebris educta suis* ("a crowd of senators…led out from their hiding

places," 3.104-05). The effect of Caesar's flooding is both to drive his opponents physically into the shadows and margins, and, on the mental plane, to drive all thoughts and speech from their heads. Even though this random group of senators (*turba patrum* hardly describes a true senate)[27] has cautiously emerged, they count for nothing: *omnia Caesar erat: privatae curia vocis / testis adest* ("Caesar was everything: the senate-house was witness to the voice of a private man," 3.108-09). This is the endpoint of his overflow, a complete filling of the political space with his own being.

However, there is one man with some fire left: the tribune Metellus.[28] He is roused to action because Caesar is bent on stealing the treasure from Saturn's temple (3.115-16). Lucan introduces him thus:

> *Tamen exciet iram*
> *viribus an possint obsistere iura per unum*
> *Libertas experta virum…* (3.112-14)
>
> Still, freedom arouses anger, testing whether right can resist strength through one man…

The emphasis on *libertas* would seem to mark Metellus as a staunch republican.[29] However, Metellus' mode of resistance is not strictly stationary, but aggressive in its own right: *Caesaris agmina rumpens* ("breaking Caesar's squadrons," 3.116). As we will see in Chapter 4, this sort of aggressive resistance bears similarities to aquatic resistance of Caesar. Thus, Caesar is formulaically awakened by Metellus' blocking the doors to the temple: *his magnam victor in iram / vocibus accensus* ("the conqueror, inflamed to great

[27] Hunink (1992) 79.

[28] Metellus is mentioned by Plut. *Caesar* 35.4-11 and App. *BC* 2.6.41.

[29] As Fantham (1996) 142 and Coffee (2009) 127 note, however, Lucan's complaint at 3.118-21 that Metellus' defense is due to the *opes* contained in the treasury diminishes his ethical position.

anger by these words," 3.133-34). Yet Caesar still tries to hide his true feelings: in a condescending speech, he contends that *dignum te Caesaris ira / nullus honor faciet* ("no honor will make you worthy of Caesar's anger," 3.136-37). According to the general, Metellus does not even rate as a worthy opponent, and hence he should spend none of his *ira* on vanquishing him.

The tribune is determined to play the martyr, which only increases Caesar's wrath:

> *Dixerat, et nondum foribus cedente tribuno*
> *acrior ira subit: saevos circumspicit enses*
> *oblitus simulare togam; cum Cotta Metellum*
> *compulit audaci nimium desistere coepto*. (3.141-44)
>
> He spoke, and conceives sharper anger as the tribune did not yet move from the doors: he looks around for his cruel swords, forgetting to feign the toga; then Cotta forced Metellus to cease from his overly daring attempt.

Predictably, Caesar's *furor* increases with increased resistance, and he can no longer keep up the pretense of peace. Fortunately, a certain Cotta whisks away the tribune at exactly the right moment.[30] Lucan's description of the result is telling: *protinus abducto patuerunt templa Metello* ("after Metellus was immediately led away the temple lay open," 3.153). It is as if Metellus alone were the barrier to Caesar's entry: remove him and the whole treasury is exposed. Caesar does not even have to resort to open force, for Cotta does it for him: *compulit* may have a primarily rhetorical sense, but the literal sense of violence is not far from the surface.[31]

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[30] The identity of this individual is unclear: Hunink (1992) 92-93 agrees with Ferrary's (1976) conjecture that Lucius Aurelius Cotta, consul in 65 BC, is meant here, but Fantham (1996) 143 n.16 is doubtful. If true, given that L. Aurelius Cotta approved Caesar's political program in 44 BC (cf. Suet. *Div. Iul.* 79.3), he may even be seen as Caesar's tool here.

[31] *Pace* Hunink (1992) 93.

The result, as Lucan carefully elaborates in a sort of mini-catalogue, is that Caesar lays claim to the entire wealth gathered by the Roman republic in all its victorious foreign wars (3.155-67). Thus, the patrimony of the Roman state all flows to one man: *tristi spoliantur templa rapina, / pauperiorque fuit tum primum Caesare Roma* ("the temple is robbed of its baleful plunder, and for the first time Rome was poorer than Caesar," 3.167-68). Like the remaining senators, this treasure was also hidden (*tum conditus imo…templo*, "then buried in the lowest part of the temple," 3.155-56), but in a formulaic sense. The temple serves as Rome's "core," its very own reserve of "energy" that had allowed the state to operate, and which Caesar has now drained.[32] This is an interesting reversal of *omnia Caesar erat*; instead of Caesar spreading out to fill all space, he gathers Rome's essence into himself. Recall the *sparsos…ignes* of the Book 1 lightning bolt simile and how the lightning was able to gather its own flames after shattering: Caesar has now absorbed the "energy" of his own city. In doing so, he has ensured that Rome will never recover: once the core is gone, then all hope of regeneration is lost. Thus Caesar implicitly refutes Cotta's consoling words to Metellus: *non sibi sed domino gravis est quae servit egestas* ("poverty that is a slave is burdensome not to itself but to its master," 3.152). By appropriating Rome's wealth for himself, Caesar no longer has need of the people or the republic; he is now their core and they are thus totally dependent on him.

[32] Since the treasure was housed in Saturn's temple, Caesar is also committing sacrilege. Also, as Sklenář (2003) 138 remarks, threatening Metellus is an additional sacrilege due to his position as tribune (Metellus describes himself as *sacro sanguine* at 3.124). Moreover, the symbolism of Saturn is also important, since Caesar, in his role as Jupiter's "replacement"—see the thunderbolt simile and Nix (2008)—is destroying the last vestige of the old order. Leigh (1999) carries this paradigm over into his felling of the Massilian grove later in Book 3. For these old orders as symbolic of Pompey and the republic, see Rowland (1969), Narducci (1979) 110, and Masters (1992) 27.

6. Caesar and Massilia's Attempt to Break the Formula

As has been acknowledged, Lucan devotes space to the episode at Massilia far beyond its historical importance.[33] For our purposes, the reason for this is that Caesar's assault on Massilia is essentially formulaic.[34] After all, this scene is the source of the simile referenced in Chapter 1 as one of the foundations of the formula (3.362-66). Caesar needs an object on which to expend his energy, otherwise it, and thus his deadly momentum, will naturally expire. After all, he had no opportunity to be violent at Rome, since the city submitted completely to him. The Massilia episode thus lays bare the essence of Lucan's Caesar. He attacks not only because he can (*Massiliam delere vacat*, "he is free to destroy Massilia," 3.360), but because the demands of the formula drive him to it.

Unlike the cowed and shameful response of the Romans, however, the Massilians actually put up a sort of resistance. They are also more subtle in their methods; unlike the valiant but simple physical resistance of Domitius or Metellus, they attempt persuasion:

> *tamen ante furorem*
> *indomitum duramque viri deflectere mentem*
> *pacifico sermone parant…* (3.303-05)
>
> Nevertheless they first prepare to deflect the warrior's untamed fury and unyielding mind with a peaceful speech…

The key word is *deflectere* here: the Massilians are not so much trying to stand up to Caesar's aggression directly (one senses that they are too intelligent to try), but rather to

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[33] Masters (1992) 13-14 notes that the extant sources agree in treating Massilia as a minor event, except for Caesar himself.

[34] Masters (1992) 22 n.25 observes that Lucan deprives Caesar of all external motivations for attacking Massilia. He argues that this is due to randomness, but he misses Caesar's own justification in the simile at 3.362-66, in which he clearly lays out the biological necessity for his assault on the city.

direct it to a new target. This is still an improvement, however, on the total surprise and panic of Ariminum and Rome in the face of Caesar's onslaught.

The Massilians first admit their uselessness as allies in civil war:

> *at, si funestas acies, si dira paratis*
> *proelia discordes, lacrimas civilibus armis*
> *secretumque damus.* (3.312-14)
>
> Yet if you plan deadly formations and dreadful battles in discord, we supply tears and a recess from civil war.

The words *lacrimas* and *secretum* mark them out as kindred to the citizens of the aforementioned two cities in a sort of passivity before Caesarian force; this is a major theme that will receive due treatment in Chapter 5. However, *secretum* can also mean a literal retreat or asylum.[35] In other words, they are not just affirming their own desire to be secluded from civil war, but, as they reveal in their speech, they are trying to offer up their own status as a *latebra* for Caesar.

After elaborating on their unsuitability as partners for Caesar, the Massilians offer an alternative to conquest of their city:

> *nobis haec summa precandi:*
> *terribilis aquilas infestaque signa relinquas*
> *urbe procul nostrisque velis te credere muris*
> *excludique sinas admisso Caesare bellum.*
> *sit locus exceptus sceleri, Magnoque tibique*
> *tutus, ut, invictae fatum si consulat urbi,*
> *foedera si placeant, sit quo veniatis inermes*. (3.329-35)
>
> This is the main point of our prayers: that you abandon the terrifying eagles and hostile standards and entrust yourself to our walls, and that you allow war to be kept out and Caesar admitted. Let there be a site exempt from crime, safe for both Magnus and you, so that, if fate provides for the

[35] Hunink (1992) 149 advises against rendering *secretum* as "asylum" or "retreat" since the Massilians do not use this sense until 3.330-35, but given that both lines occur in the same speech, the literal sense should be operative as well. The Massilians are not only announcing their own seclusion from civil war, but craftily holding it out to Caesar as a trap. Caesar understands this implicitly, hence the anger in his speech below.

> unconquered city and if treaties are agreeable, there may be a place where you both can come unarmed.

Now proposing that Caesar disarm may be an extraordinarily bold move, but the envoys have benign intentions. However, as we will see, Caesar suspects a more ulterior motive, so it is instructive to see how he might come to this conclusion. Usually, recesses, retreats and *latebrae* are associated with those defeated by Caesar (as will be seen in Chapter 5). This fact should already mark their resistance as hopeless, but they are actually attempting to use their own victim status to deflect Caesarian violence. By holding out their identity as *secretum* to Caesar, the Massilians are trying to fight active force with passivity. They wish to "conquer" Caesar without a fight by persuading him to abandon his entire army, thus weakening and enveloping him into their own obscurity. Given that Caesar's army is what makes him "Caesar," he cannot help but interpret their offer as a ploy to weaken him. Here is where the alternate sense *secretum* finally comes to the fore: if Caesar enters the city alone, he will in effect be "swallowed" up and rendered harmless. He will thus have taken himself out of the civil war and in effect become one the Massilians themselves.

Caesar's reply is thus suitably suspicious:

> *sed, si solus eam dimissis degener armis,*
> *tunc mihi tecta patent. iam non excludere tantum,*
> *inclusisse volunt.* (3.367-69)
>
> But if I go alone, weakened from dismissing my men,
> then their homes are open to me. They do not wish so much to shut me out as to keep me in.

Caesar interprets the Massilians' offer in a hostile manner, especially *inclusisse*: instead of hospitality, he sees an attempt to vanquish him without needing to fight at all. By

dismissing his own army Caesar would weaken himself, and then the city could easily engulf him in this state: *degener* is thus meant in a physical sense here (*OLD* 3).[36] The Massilians even show an awareness of Caesar's flooding paradigm: by enticing Caesar into their city and thus enclosing him, the Massilians are treating his elemental power as aquatic, placing "banks" or restraints around him. Caesar's retort is simple and to the point: *et nihil esse meo discetis tutius aevo / quam duce me bellum* ("and you will learn that nothing is safer in my time than war with me as general," 3.371-72). *Meo…aevo* reasserts his mastery of time and space as the "one man" who has just taken possession of Roman political space, and *duce me bellum* turns the tables on the Massilian strategy by making clear that he intends to do just the opposite of what they propose: it is he who is to incorporate the Massilians. Just as he did with Rome, Caesar intends to conquer this city and then merge its resources into his own.[37]

However, this task is easier said than done. The Massilians have already indicated their willingness to put up fierce resistance if their plan to lure Caesar into the city does not work (3.342-55). The rest of Book 3 is devoted to the assault against Massilia, first by land, which ends inconclusively, and then on sea, which finally results in a Caesarian victory (3.761-62). Yet even though Massilia eventually capitulates, by that time Caesar is long gone, having lost his patience (*dux tamen impatiens haesuri ad moenia Martis*, "yet the general, impatient of war that would delay at city walls," 3.453) and already rushed off to Spain in preparation for the campaign in Book 4. In fact, he disappears from the scene right when the actual siege is about to start—small wonder that

[36] The adjective recalls Laelius' contemptuous dismissal of the senate as *degenerem…togam*. By dismissing his army, Caesar would become as weak as the republicans and as incapable of resisting.

[37] This fact supports Coffee's (2009) 146 point that Caesar uses the wealth from the treasury at Rome not as an end in itself, but as a means to support his war effort. This can be interpreted formulaically: both Massilia and Rome serve as *materia*, fuel for the Caesarian dynamo.

it ends up failing. Formulaic breakthrough is not possible in his absence. Thus Lucan can preemptively praise Massilia before the battle begins:

> *Iam satis hoc Graiae memorandum contigit urbi*
> *aeternumque decus, quod non impulsa nec ipso*
> *strata metu tenuit flagrantis in omnia belli*
> *praecipitem cursum, raptisque a Caesare cunctis*
> *vincitur una mora*. (3.388-92)
>
> Now the Greek city won this memorable and eternal glory, that, neither assaulted nor fallen from fear, it checked the precipitous path of war blazing through all, nor when everything was ravaged by Caesar, was it alone conquered by delay.

The last line sums up the situation: the city only succumbs through delay, not collapse as a result of assault. For Caesar, the formula demands a literal *Blitzkrieg*, not protracted siege or attritional warfare.

Let us conclude by briefly touching upon the famous Massilian grove passage at 3.399-425.[38] In terms of the formula, it can be seen as a counterpart or double to the main Massilian narrative. To be sure, they are in some aspects complete opposites: the Massilians take pride in their enlightened Greek heritage (they receive Caesar *Cecropiae praelata fronde Minervae*, "with Cecropian Minerva's leaf proferred," 3.306), while the grove is a repository of barbaric ritual devoid of the traditional gods, even containing evidence of human sacrifice (3.402-05). Nevertheless, they also share one important trait: both are *secreta*. Regardless of the Massilians' intentions, the effect of Caesar and Pompey concluding a truce in their city would be to halt the relentless Caesarian tide and thus obscure him from history as a mere *privatus*. Likewise, the grove is almost hermetically sealed off from its own environment: neither wind nor lightning affect it

[38] Phillips (1968) 298-99 argues for primary influence from the Erysichthon episode in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 8.741-76; Fantham (1996) 149-50 bolsters this conclusion by noting the spread of Greek culture from Massilia, making it improbable that a grove dedicated to barbaric ritual would still be in existence.

(3.408-10), but its trees move of their own volition (*non ulli frondem praebentibus aurae / arboribus suus horror inest*, "the trees have their own shuddering, offering their leaves to no breeze," 3.410-11). There is even a hint of the core motif in the rumor that the grove's felled trees can rise again (*iam fama ferebat…et procumbentis iterum consurgere taxos*, "rumor had it…that toppling yew-trees rose again," 3.417-19).[39] But the real similarity lies in what Massilia and the grove mean in Caesar's eyes. Like his usurpation of Rome's wealth, Caesar sees only utilitarian value in Massilia and the grove: he wishes to draft the city into the war effort, and he seeks to level the grove in order to use its trees as timber for siege equipment with which to pry open Massilia (3.426-27). Caesar succeeds in the latter task against the pious dread of his men (3.429-39), yet Lucan does not mention the capture of Massilia in the poem, only victory at sea. The destruction of the grove, then, can be seen as a substitute for the taking of the city; in any case, Caesar finds his mark yet again.

7. Caesar and the Mutiny: The Low Point of the Formulaic Arc

Given all of Caesar's successes so far, it is instructive to examine one of his weaker moments: the mutiny in Book 5.[40] Jamie Masters has demonstrated the structural importance of this book: it is the midpoint of the epic as we have it.[41] For Caesar himself, Book 5 is especially important because it contains the two greatest challenges to

[39] In light of the observation by Ahl (1976) 199, Rosner-Siegel (1983) 175-76, and Hunink (1992) 181 that the oak felled by Caesar at 3.433-34 is an allusion to the Pompeian oak in Book 1, the rumored regeneration of the yews can also be seen as an attempt by Lucan to imagine Pompey as capable of returning to his former glory; more on this theme in Chapter 5. Masters (1992) 28 suggests that the rising and falling yews allude to the repetition of civil war.

[40] Fantham (1985) argues that Lucan conflates two mutinies (see Suet. *Div. Iul.* 69-70) into a single event.

[41] Masters (1992) 91-93.

his authority and survivability: the mutiny and the storm. The former threatens to strip him of his power, while the latter compounds the danger by threatening his very existence. What do these twin crises mean for the formula? It seems that, beyond the individual cycles, the formula also has a large-scale structure: the first five books can be seen as a great arc from dormant phase to dormant phase. In Book 1, Lucan described Caesar's massive build-up of forces in the catalogue, leading to his rapid victories in Italy and Spain. However, all this expended energy eventually forces Caesar to come down to earth, so to speak, and remain quiescent for a while. In other words, his army is now exhausted and its total energy has diminished, hence its unwillingness to continue fighting. Thus, even though Lucan reintroduces Caesar as no less energetic than ever (*victrices aquilas alium laturus in orbem*, "about to carry his victorious eagles into another world," 5.238), his army suddenly signals that they have had enough:

> *nullo nam Marte subactus*
> *intra castrorum timuit tentoria ductor*
> *perdere successus scelerum, cum paene fideles*
> *per tot bella manus satiatae sanguine tandem*
> *destituere ducem; seu maesto classica paulum*
> *intermissa sono claususque et frigidus ensis*
> *expulerat belli furias, seu, praemia miles*
> *dum maiora petit, damnat causamque ducemque*
> *et scelere imbutos etiamnunc venditat enses.*[42] (5.240-48)
>
> For the general, overcome by no warfare, feared to lose the success of his crimes among the tents of his camp, when his men, faithful through so many wars, finally sated with blood, almost deserted him; whether the fanfare, ceasing a little from its gloomy sound, and the sword, sheathed and cold, had expelled the madness of war, or while the soldiers seek greater rewards, they condemn both cause and leader and even now wish to offer their swords, dyed with crime, for sale.

[42] Fantham (1985) 127 sees a link between 5.238 and Albinovanus Pedo as quoted by Seneca *Suas.* 1.15.

As usual, Caesar is restless and hungry for new victories: *timuit…perdere successus scelerum* alludes to *successus urguere suos* in the Book 1 character sketch (1.148). However, what is striking here is that Caesar and his men are formulaically at odds: unlike their general, they have now peaked: *satiatae sanguine* (the same verb is used of Caesar at 9.950 when he reappears after Pharsalus).[43] The first *seu* clause gives a formulaic reason for their lack of enthusiasm: lack of an enemy causes their *furor* to dissipate, just as Caesar described in his Book 3 simile. While it is not the same cause as that which the soldiers themselves will point to in their speech, the common factor for both is the absence of an opponent.

Lucan continues with harsher words:

> *tot raptis truncus manibus gladioque relictus*
> *paene suo, qui tot gentis in bella trahebat,*
> *scit non esse ducis strictos sed militis enses.* (5.252-54)
>
> Mutilated after so many hands were stolen from him, and left behind with almost only his own sword, he who dragged so many nations into war knows that the drawn swords are not the general's but the soldier's.

Caesar without an army is mutilated and diminished (*truncus*); there is no way that he can partake of the rise and fall of the formula without the manpower to translate his desires into reality.[44] His soldiers are "seceding" from Caesar, trying to accomplish what the Massilians wanted and leaving Caesar behind as just one soldier among many.

The soldiers' speech is interesting on a number of levels. First, it is not actually a direct address to Caesar, but merely a complaint expressed aloud (*effudere minas*, "they

[43] Ahl (1976) 203 perceptively observes that at this point, the goals of Caesar and his soldiers diverge; they are already satisfied with having taken Rome, as expressed in their speech at 5.274.

[44] Ahl (1976) 200 notes that the secret to Caesar's power lies in his ability to dominate his men.

poured forth threats," 5.261).[45] This is crucial because it isolates them from facing Caesar directly and aligns them with the silence of Caesar's victims (a theme to be discussed in Chapter 5). Thus in rhetorical terms the army has lost even before confronting Caesar. On the other hand, their "soliloquy" is appropriate because they already possess Pompeian characteristics:

> *finis quis quaeritur armis?*
> *quid satis est, si Roma parum est? iam respice canos*
> *invalidasque manus et inanis cerne lacertos.*
> *usus abit vitae, bellis consumpsimus aevum:*
> *ad mortem dimitte senes.* (5.273-77)
>
> What limit does he seek for war? What is enough if Rome is too little? Look upon our white hairs and feeble hands and gaze upon our useless arms. The time for making use of life is gone; we have spent our whole lifetime in war: dismiss us old men to death.

Their age, and hence their resulting weakness, links them to Pompey, whose advanced age as compared to Caesar's is exaggerated by the poet at 1.129-30. Such weakness is due to a continuous series of campaigns all the way from Gaul to Spain (5.264-66), culminating in a *sententia*: *totoque exercitus orbe / te vincente perit* ("and in the whole world your army perishes while you conquer," 5.266-67). Line 5.273 is especially biting: as seen above, in Book 1 Caesar had declared that his men were already worn out from ten years of fighting in Gaul (1.343-45), partly out of a rhetorical need to deceive an imaginary Pompey.[46] Now, ironically, they really are weak. Yet the verbal correlation

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[45] Lucan does not offer definitive proof until 5.287 with the third-person verb *comperit*, having begun the speech with a vocative *Caesar* at 5.260; the ambiguous effect this produces deserves further study. They thus never form a verbal connection with Caesar, and their complaints become lost in the muddle as *discordia* (5.299) and *tumultus* (5.300). This is crucial because the content of their complaints is that of the "losers" or "quitters" of civil war (such as Afranius' men pardoned by Caesar in Book 4), whose very silence already signifies their defeat before they even finish speaking.

[46] Fantham (1985) 124-25 argues for a correspondence between the speeches in the mutiny episode to those of Caesar and Laelius in Book 1. Thus, there is already evidence for a structural connection between these two books; the present argument offers an additional link.

also outlines by ring-composition the macro-formulaic arc stretching from Books 1 to 5: the exhaustion of the army means that Caesar has returned to a situation comparable to that in the beginning of the epic, though in fact much graver (considering the ambiguity of the army's condition in Book 1).

The seriousness of the situation is highlighted by the soldiers' use of *finis*. The energy of this army has almost run its course; *finis* suggests that Caesar's army wishes to break the formulaic cycle once and for all and flatten it out to a linear trajectory of withdrawal from civil war. Thus the narrator's *sententia* at 5.299: *finem civili faciat discordia bello* ("may discord bring an end to civil war"). However fleeting the mutiny turns out to be, Lucan hints that the Caesarian cycle may also be broken through internal disunity. After all, he describes the mutineers as openly angry: *nec pectore tecto / ira latens* (5.255-56). This incipient "civil war" between Caesar and his men is an abstract version of what happened to Curio's army in its catastrophic defeat: recall that they turned their swords on each other, rendering them unable to gather themselves into a coherent whole and thus inhibiting the formula's progress.

The army's confidence increases as they conclude:

> *adde quod ingrato meritorum iudice virtus*
> *nostra perit: quidquid gerimus Fortuna vocatur.*
> *nos fatum sciat esse suum. licet omne deorum*
> *obsequium speres, irato milite, Caesar,*
> *pax erit.* (5.291-95)
>
> Moreover, our valor goes to waste when the judge of our services is ungrateful: whatever we have accomplished is called fortune. Let him know that we are his destiny. Although you hope for every accommodation of the gods, Caesar, with angry soldiers there will be peace.

These are clever lines. The soldiers are in a sense deconstructing the concepts of *fatum* and *Fortuna*, and with them, the formula: such abstract concepts as Lucan uses to explain Caesar's phenomenal success (having banished the Olympians from his epic) boil down to actual human beings, who now distinguish themselves as the main engine of the formula, as the core component within that blanket term "Caesar" used by the poet.[47] In other words, there is nothing mysterious or inevitable about Caesar's success, but it is all due to the toil and sweat of his soldiers. If "Caesar" is nothing more than the sum of his parts, as *nos…suum* suggests, then if his men quit from exhaustion or refusal to fight, what the world knows as "Caesar" will disappear as well.

Caesar's army has staked its claim as the true "engine" of the formula; it will now be Caesar's task to demonstrate the opposite:

> *Quem non ille ducem potuit terrere tumultus?*
> *fata sed in praeceps solitus demittere Caesar*
> *fortunamque suam per summa pericula gaudens*
> *exercere venit; nec dum desaeviat ira*
> *expectat: medios properat temptare furores.* (5.300-04)
>
> What general could not be terrified by that commotion? But Caesar arrives, accustomed to propel his fate headlong and rejoicing to engage his fortune through the greatest dangers; nor does he wait until the anger cools down: he hastens to test the high point of their fury.

The last two lines explain everything: even though his soldiers are declaring formulaic civil war on him, he is still a creature of the formula, and as such welcomes open confrontation because it only makes him stronger.[48] Moreover, he even sees opportunity in this display of *furor*:

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[47] For the difficulty in distinguishing *fatum* and *fortuna* in Lucan, see Dick (1967) 236.

[48] Leigh (1997) 70-71 briefly mentions Caesar's fear by referencing 5.309, but the other example he mentions, lines 5.316-18, shows exactly the opposite: Caesar is *intrepidus vultu meruitque timeri / non metuens* ("with a fearless expression he deserved to be feared, as not being afraid").

> *vult omnia certe*
> *a se saeva peti, vult praemia Martis amari;*
> *militis indomiti tantum mens sana timetur*. (5.307-09)
>
> He certainly wants all savagery to be demanded of him, he wants them to love the rewards of war; he only fears the unbridled soldier's sound mind.

Caesar here not only shows supreme confidence in the face of possible danger, but also craftiness: anything that energizes his men is good for the overall energy of his campaign. That is, Caesar wishes to co-opt this potentially disloyal *furor* and channel it back into the "appropriate" use, which is to unleash it against his foes in the actual civil war.

However, the soldiers' fundamental weakness is that their rage is unproductive because it is aimed at ending civil war and thus all that is associated with the formula. Consequently, it is also ephemeral, for with the advent of *finis*, *ira* ceases to exist. This is the sense of 5.309; being unbridled (*indomitus*) in the service of a healthy cause inherently does not allow them to renew themselves formulaically. This is why the narrator advises Caesar to cool down: *lassare et disce sine armis / posse pati* ("be tired and learn to be able to endure without weapons," 5.313-14): his army's *ira* is only the outward sign of exhaustion, and Caesar would do well to become more like them. The narrator again stresses the Pompeian nature of their anger: *bellum te civile fugit* ("civil war flees you," 5.316), *fuga* being Pompey's character trait *par excellence*. Thus, Caesar is mistaken in wanting to incorporate his army's *furor* back into the formula; truly Caesarian rage (that is, the desire to destroy) begets only more rage in an infinite loop.

Caesar's speech is intended to demonstrate to his army their true master; he will show them that far from being the heart of what makes him successful, it is merely an expendable tool that he can discard at any time:[49]

> *invenient haec arma manus, vobisque repulsis*
> *tot reddet Fortuna viros quot tela vacabunt*. (5.326-27)
>
> These weapons will find hands, and after you have been cast off, fortune will return to me as many men as are available for my weapons.

This particular example of hypallage—swords finding men instead of vice versa—is more than just one of Lucan's rhetorical flourishes. Caesar is inverting the model that the soldiers presented in their speech, in which they cast themselves as the core of the formula. In contrast, he now places himself at the center as the indispensable core, at the same time wrenching away *Fortuna* from the collectivity of his soldier's efforts back to being the mysterious aura surrounding him as the "one man." The mutineers will be shunted aside as indistinguishable from the mob: *vos despecta senes exhaustaque sanguine turba / cernetis nostros iam plebs Romana triumphos* ("you old men, a crowd despised and drained of blood, will watch our triumphs, now merely the Roman rabble," 5.333-34).[50] Lack of blood denotes dormancy (recall in contrast Laelius' proclamation of his surging blood). Only Caesar remains immutable:

> *Caesaris an cursus vestrae sentire putatis*
> *damnum posse fugae? veluti, si cuncta minentur*
> *flumina quos miscent pelago subducere fontes,*
> *non magis ablatis umquam descenderit aequor,*
> *quam nunc crescit, aquis.* (5.335-39)

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[49] Fantham (1985) 122 observes that from the mutiny right to the end of the storm, the pace of the narrative is determined by Caesar's speeches. Thus, even in a moment of greatest mortal danger, Caesar is in control of the poem, so to speak.

[50] Coffee (2009) 149 rightly notes that Caesar sees his men as commodities and essentially interchangeable.

> Do you think Caesar's progress can feel the loss of your escape? It is as though, if all the rivers threaten to withdraw their sources which they mingle with the ocean, the sea will no more descend when the waters have been removed than it now grows.

This is Caesar's third simile about himself (the Hannibal simile in Book 1 and the formulaic simile at Massilia in Book 3 are the others) and also the most hyperbolic. Caesar presents himself as an ocean whose being remains unaffected by the amount of water that enters or leaves it. It is not even a question of reverse dependency: the Caesarian ocean does not affect rivers or their sources, but seems completely cut off from other bodies of water. Now, the idea that the ocean is apparently unaffected by a constant influx of water is not a novel one, as Barratt notes.[51] However, Caesar also claims that the opposite is true, which not only is a novel sentiment, but also isolates his ocean from natural harmony. In this respect, it is instructive to contrast this passage with Acoreus' description of the Nile as part of a cosmic whole (10.214-218): even if the Egyptian river is mightier than other rivers (10.228), it still has a well-defined role and never oversteps its limits, unlike Caesar here. Not only does Caesar see himself as greater than the sum of his parts, but he denies the necessity of these parts altogether.[52] Even at his weakest moment, truly alone and faced with an angry crowd of mutineers, Caesar has the audacity to inflate what would be his most precarious dormant period into an image of already universal pervasiveness, which seems no longer to have the need—or even the space—to overflow or be dynamic any longer; such is his rhetorical audacity. It is almost as if he

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[51] Barratt (1979) 109-110, quoting among others Lucr. 1.230ff and Sen. *NQ* 3.4 and *De Prov.* 1.2.

[52] Green (1991) 244 is correct in identifying Caesar's strangely paradoxical self-sufficiency at the moment of his greatest physical isolation here. While she is right to consider the army as Caesar's tool in most circumstances, however, in this particular case Caesar brilliantly raises the stakes by reversing cause and effect: the soldiers are the cause and he the effect.

were envisioning what he would become rather than what he is now—that is, Caesarism as an irreducible and permanent condition of the universe.

Therein lies the unique characteristic of this simile differentiating it from the other formulaic similes: in casting himself as the ocean and not as a *fons*, Caesar is actually looking to the *telos* of the formula, not the cyclical process itself. The formula *per se* only examines the manner in which Caesar is able to destroy his opponents, but is not concerned with the result of that destruction. Thus Caesar is no mere river (as *Caesaris…cursus* implies), but the ocean itself, the endpoint of all rivers: he is projecting a future image of himself as *dictator perpetuus* into the minds of his men—in other words, what he will become after he wins the civil war. The socio-political counterpart to such cosmic arrogance is Caesar's frankly imperial *sententia*: *humanum paucis vivit genus* ("the human race lives for a few," 5.343).

Such an impressive display of rhetorical hubris causes the mutiny to collapse instantly:

> *Tremuit saeva sub voce minantis*
> *vulgus iners, unumque caput tam magna iuventus*
> *privatum factura timet, velut ensibus ipsis*
> *imperet invito moturus milite ferrum.* (5.364-67)
>
> The useless mob trembled under Caesar's threatening voice, and such mighty youth fears one man whom they were close to making a private citizen, as if he commands the very swords and could move their steel, though his soldiers be unwilling.

The army is so terrified of Caesar that they think he has the power to control weapons telepathically. His rhetorical presence is such that he is able to convince them of exactly what he said at 5.326-27, that Caesar, this mere *unum caput*, is in fact the indispensable *caput* that really pulls the strings. Caesar may see himself as something greater than

nature, and here he persuades his men of this, but in reality, even at his most destructive, he is only following the nature-based pattern of the formulaic cycle. Yet his rhetoric works, for *velut…ferrum* is as paradoxical as the ocean simile: Caesar has been able to convince his men of entertaining such a notion through his rhetoric. By using an unnatural image to fight off his army's equally unnatural overturning of the formula, he is able to return them to the correct formulaic equilibrium of Caesar as a core from which the *furor* that controls them emanates.[53] On a final note, Leigh points out the weariness of the narrator's interjections on the mutiny and argues that this lack of enthusiasm is influenced by the failure of the fraternization episode in Book 4; in other words, by this point it is too late to stop Caesar's progress.[54] Having reached his low point in this book, the next chapter will chart Caesar's course as he continues to rise in Book 6, his high point at Pharsalus, and challenges to his survival in the last book.

[53] Fantham (1985) 121 n.4 argues that Lucan places the mutiny in Book 5 instead of Book 4, where it should be (assuming that he based his version on the mutiny at Placentia) in order to contrast Pompey's legitimate receiving of power from the senate in Book 5 with Caesar's illegitimate reassertion of control. This reasoning is perfectly sound from a moral standpoint. However, in terms of the formula (or even wartime leadership generally speaking), the opposite is true. Caesar comes out by far the stronger, and Pompey's lack of absolute authority actually foreshadows the events of Pharsalus, in which he is helpless to stop his army from initiating battle.

[54] Leigh (1997) 71-72.

Chapter 3. Caesar and the Formula Part 2: Books 6-10

The previous chapter showed Caesar's progress along a path of brief recharging, overflow and flooding, and exhaustion and crisis. The danger that faces Caesar in Book 5 is only temporary, however. In this chapter, we will see that Caesar gradually builds up his energy in Book 6 (though he is still forced to take a predominantly defensive stance due to the disposition of forces at Dyrrhachium), thus leading to his greatest breakthrough in the epic at Pharsalus.

Having definitively crashed through the Pompeian barrier in Book 7, Caesar then drops out of the narrative. After an absence of two books, Caesar reappears in Book 9 on the downward curve in his formulaic trajectory. This sinking into dormancy and relative weakness is more prolonged than his Book 5 exhaustion, however. Having achieved domination of the Roman world by defeating Pompey, Caesar effectively has no enemies left. This outcome is, of course, the best he could hope for, but at the same time it allows him to sustain his dormancy for a longer period, thus opening him up to a wider variety of distractions as well as forms of resistance (both slow and sudden). Thus, Caesar is sidetracked by Troy and spends the last book ensconced in luxury at Alexandria while indulging his intellectual bent (even though his curiosity about the Nile's source is merely his instinctive aggression transferred to the mental plane, as the next chapter will show). However, this rechanneling of his attention leaves him vulnerable, first to the wiles of Cleopatra, and then to a plot on his life by the murderers of Pompey. In the last half of Book 10, Caesar is thus forced to fight for his life in the most precarious situation he has known since five books earlier. The fluctuations in his fortunes (and thus in the

formula) become much more frequent due to his overall weakness, until he is trapped in the final section of the book without a means of escape; Lucan mirrors his dilemma in a flashback to Pompey's and Scaeva's "mutual besieging" at Dyrrhachium. The abrupt end of the epic thus leaves Caesar in perpetual stasis.[1]

1. Interlude at Dyrrhachium

The first part of the Dyrrhachium campaign will be covered in Chapter 5, since it is where Pompey truly takes the initiative for the only time in the epic. Not coincidentally, Dyrrhachium is the only place where Lucan clearly describes him as exhibiting Caesarian behavior. With Pompey trying to break out of his seaside fortress, Caesar must perforce take on the role of barrier. The former almost succeeds in breaking out, until Scaeva intervenes and takes on both roles as an "offensive barrier," temporarily halting Pompey's drive to break through and overflow.

However, even after Scaeva successfully prevents Pompey from escaping, the momentum is still on the latter's side. After Pompey succeeds in finally breaking through another part of the wall (6.268-71), Caesar must react quickly. However, he seems to be too late:

> *Vix proelia Caesar*
> *senserat, elatus specula quae prodidit ignis:*
> *invenit impulsos presso iam pulvere muros,*
> *frigidaque, ut veteris, deprendit signa ruinae.*
> *accendit pax ipsa loci, movitque furorem*
> *Pompeiana quies et victo Caesare somnus.*
> *ire vel in clades properat dum gaudia turbet.* (6.278-84)

[1] Ahl (1976) 46 notes the "recovery of poise" on Lucan's part in Book 10, the result of what he deems on p.45 as a "secretive confidence" in Books 8-10. This is too broad an assessment (he glosses over the narrative anguish over Pompey's death at the end of Book 8), but he is correct with regard to the last two books. In this sense, the "cliffhanger" ending of the epic can be read as the ultimate revenge of the poet on Caesar after weakening him for an entire book.

> Hardly had Caesar gotten wind of battles which were betrayed by fire emitted from a watchtower: he discovers toppled walls with already packed dust, and comes upon cold signs of ruin, as of long ago. The location's very peace inflames him, and his fury is aroused by Pompeian rest and sleep after Caesar was defeated. He hastens to go even into disaster, provided he should disrupt Pompey's joy.

This passage is interesting for a few reasons. First of all, it marks the first time in Book 6 that Caesar finally regains some formulaic *furor*. Yet what exactly is the situation that prompts his regeneration? Lucan seems to conflate Pompeian inactivity and Caesarian ruin into the same stasis, designated by *pax*. Yet they are fundamentally different: Pompey's men must rest as a result of their formulaic breakthrough, while Caesar's army has been so utterly decimated that they seem to have vanished from the pages of time (*ut veteris*). After all, *pax* is a negative term in Lucan: it refers either to the dead-end of total Caesarian domination (*cum domino pax ista venit*, "that peace comes with a master," 1.670) or to republican ill-preparedness for war (as treated in Chapter 5). The quick defeat of Caesar's garrison at this spot is a harsh reminder to him that despite Scaeva's superhuman effort, at this point Caesar's and Pompey's reversal of roles is as fixed as ever.

The apparent hyperbole of *ut veteris* also requires an explanation. I propose that line 6.281 offers a brief thematic glimpse into the post-Pharsalian future. For the ancient ruins of Troy are the first thing Caesar sees after his reappearance in Book 9, and, as I will argue below, are subtly meant to be conflated with the dead and defeated Pompey. Likewise, here he sees an image of permanent defeat: *frigida*, in formulaic terms, indicates the inability to regain the heat of *furor* through regeneration. Thus, Caesar's fortress has been defeated so thoroughly that its formulaic potential has been destroyed and the cycle broken, as it were. He is in fact staring at a part of himself being subjected

to a future Pompeian outcome, while the Pompeians who have "stolen" his formula are resting on their laurels.

After this point of low energy, Caesar attacks the Pompeian Torquatus at 6.285 in accordance to the formula. However, he fails, perhaps due to the lack of an openly resisting opponent. Accordingly, he falls into a trap as Pompey himself suddenly surges from the hills: *cum super e totis immisit collibus arma / effuditque acies obsaeptum Magnus in hostem* ("when from all the hills above Magnus discharged his army and poured fourth his troops upon the hemmed-in enemy," 6.291-92).[2] There is a striking similarity between Pompey's sudden attack and Juba's final ambush of Curio; the latter also hid his troops in the hills (4.741) and sprung his trap from them (4.746-47). As Lucan takes great care to specify, only Pompey's *pietas* stayed his hand and prevented him from concluding the war (6.303-05). Otherwise, Caesar may well have ended up like his foolhardy lieutenant Curio. In fact, his men were ready to fulfill the suicidal outcome of the lion simile: *hostibus occurrit fugiens inque ipsa pavendo / fata ruit* ("as they fled, they ran into the enemy and in fear, rushed into their very destiny," 6.298-99). The similarity with Curio is enhanced because, as we saw in Chapter 1, Curio failed due to an inability to function formulaically. Likewise, the fact that Caesar gained *furor* from defeat also indicates a malfunctioning of the formula that almost led him to defeat. Thus, Caesar must beat a hasty and shameful retreat: *deserit averso possessam numine sedem / Caesar et Emathias lacero petit agmine terras* ("Caesar abandons his position that was possessed by a hostile divinity, and seeks Emathian lands with his mangled troops," 6.314-15). *Possessam numine sedem* succinctly sums up the highly unusual situation of

[2] In a final insult to Caesar, Pompey is compared to an erupting Mount Aetna (6.294-95); he has even co-opted the Caesarian element of fire.

Book 6, in which the two protagonists' roles are briefly reversed. It turns out that Caesar has not fully recovered from the macro-formulaic low point in Book 5. Yet the Scaeva episode also shows that Caesarian force is staging a comeback in preparation for the shattering climax of Book 7.

2. Caesar at Pharsalus: The Climactic Flood

Caesar does not initiate the Battle of Pharsalus; just as in Book 6, he reacts to Pompey's initiative (7.235-39). When he sees the other side marching toward the battlefield, his reaction is at first typical: *aeger quippe morae flagransque cupidine regni* ("sick indeed of delay and burning with desire for monarchy," 7.240). However, his mood immediately switches:

> *discrimina postquam*
> *adventare ducum supremaque proelia vidit*
> *casuram et fatis sensit nutare ruinam,*
> *illa quoque in ferrum rabies promptissima paulum*
> *languit, et casus audax spondere secundos*
> *mens stetit in dubio, quam nec sua fata timere*
> *nec Magni sperare sinunt. formidine mersa*
> *prosilit hortando melior fiducia vulgo…*[3] (7.242-49)
>
> After he saw the trial of the generals and the final battle arrive, and felt the ruin that was destined to fall waver, his frenzy most prepared for the sword also grew a little sluggish, and his mind, confident in guaranteeing favorable outcomes, stood in doubt; his own destiny does not permit him to fear, nor Magnus' permit him to hope. Repressing his fear, confidence bursts forth, the better for encouraging the crowd…

Why would Caesar hesitate before the very battle which he has been so eagerly awaiting? As one of the few such moments in the epic, it deserves consideration. Certainly, the most obvious connection can be made with the crossing of the Rubicon: in both cases

[3] I depart from Shackleton Bailey in accepting *et fatis* at 7.244, following the reasoning at Dilke (1960) 112.

Caesar is at a point of no return, where accepting the guidance of his fortune will result in irrevocable consequences (he makes this comparison in his speech at 7.254-55). The key line here is 7.244, which shows an uncharacteristic awareness of the devastating results of his actions. Could Caesar have suddenly grown a conscience? *Fatis* would seem to indicate that Caesar is not talking about himself. Yet Caesar being Caesar, it is difficult to imagine that the *ruina* with which he is concerned is either Pompey's or the republic's. Instead, the noun most likely refers to his possible downfall. The Rubicon crossing also comes into play here, but as an "absent" subtext in conjunction with the lion simile. Recall from Chapter 1 that the end of this simile offered the possibility of the lion's demise through a suicidal charge. While there was no chance of Caesar endangering his life by merely crossing a river, Pharsalus is in a sense the logical outcome of that act, and only here do we realize that the lion simile pointed toward this very moment, when Caesar's survival really hangs in the balance. And even though Lucan works in the *quam* clause as an ironic counterpoint (thus answering the "question" of the lion simile, at least for now), Caesar is still unaware of his own fate. Nevertheless, being the consummate dissembler, he masks this existential fear.

Nevertheless, this hesitation reveals itself in the course of this remarkable speech. One of its main themes is the close relationship that Caesar has with his men. Contrary to his arrogant dismissal of the mutineers in Book 5, he agrees with them here in their view of "Caesar" as the sum total of their strength: *in manibus vestris, quantus sit Caesar, habetis* ("in your hands you have however much Caesar is," 7.253).[4] At this most critical of all junctures, there is to be no conflict between general and army, but all are to be

[4] Nehrkorn (1960) 164-69 notes the echoes of Book 5 here.

united as one body—a unity which is the key to the success of the formula because it allows the Caesarian machine to operate smoothly.

Thus, Caesar can shift focus from himself to his men, a maneuver not only rhetorically effective in masking his real iron-fisted control—in fact, his first words *o domitor mundi…miles* ("O soldier, conqueror of the world," 7.250-51) already establish this strategy of eliminating the distance between commander and legionary—but also establishes a formulaic link between Caesar and his men. In other words, Caesar affirms that he is the core of his army, as formulaic *furor* can flow from himself on to his men: *omnia dum vobis liceant, nihil esse recuso* ("as long as you are permitted everything, there is nothing I refuse to be," 7.267). Like Pompey's army, Caesar's men will stream out to battle in *furor*; unlike them, their energy emanates from their commander, thus linking them all in a network that ensures their victory. Lucan will emphasize this flowing of energy from its source when he depicts Caesar's army as a crowd of Caesars.

His next rhetorical trick is to emphasize the foreign contingents in Pompey's army, thus masking the internecine nature of the conflict and pitting it as a contest of Roman versus barbarian:

> *civilia paucae*
> *bella manus facient: pugnae pars magna levabit*
> *his orbem populis Romanumque obteret hostem.*
> *ite per ignavas gentes famosaque regna*
> *et primo ferri motu prosternite mundum…* (7.274-78)
>
> Few hands will practice civil war: most of the battle will unburden the world of these peoples and will crush Rome's enemies. Pass through idle nations and renowned kingdoms and destroy the world with the first movement of your swords…

Having established a tight linkage with his army in the first part of the speech, he now proceeds to the next step, which is formulaic breakthrough. The field of Pharsalus is a

microcosm of the world; in one fell swoop he can annihilate the entire barbarian east, continuing his unstoppable flooding from the first four books that was temporarily halted by the multiple crises of Books 5 and 6. In particular, *ite per* outlines a formulaic thrust: the barbarian ranks are the barrier through which Caesar will break and then flow over the battlefield and beyond.

However, Caesar suddenly and unexpectedly shifts his tone:

> *videor fluvios spectare cruoris*
> *calcatosque simul reges sparsumque senatus*
> *corpus et immensa populos in caede natantis.* (7.292-94)
>
> I seem to be watching rivers of gore and trampled kings together with the scattered body of the senate and peoples swimming in gigantic slaughter.

This passage is striking: it is impossible to distinguish whether this is a masterful oratorical performance for the benefit of his soldiers, or whether Caesar is letting his mask slip momentarily and expressing the full magnitude of his *furor*, the mysterious formulaic energy that powers his being. Yet Lucan is also being cleverly allusive here. The motif of seeing the future is taken straight from prophetic language: for example, Virgil describes the Sibyl's vision of war in *Aeneid* 6 as *bella, horrida bella, / et Thybrim multo spumantem sanguine cerno*, "I see wars, dreadful wars, and the Tiber foaming with much blood" (6.85-86).[5] In addition, here Lucan recalls the anonymous Roman matron at the conclusion of Book 1. This woman, possessed by Apollo, imagines herself ranging over various sites of future civil war battles: *video Pangaea nivosis / cana iugis latosque Haemi sub rupe Philippos* ("I see Pangaea white with snowy ridges and broad Philippi under Haemus' cliff," 1.679-80). However, Lucan brilliantly transforms this *topos* here:

[5] Leigh (1997) 296; at 292 he quotes Ovid's *Heroides* 19.59 as providing the closest linguistic parallel: *nam modo te videor prope iam spectare natantem*.

by having Caesar pronounce this vision of blood, he transforms the tone from horror into a monstrous ecstasy. In effect, Caesar is acting as the prophet for his own coming bloodshed.

But Lucan is not yet done, for Caesar admits that the very act of envisioning the future causes delay:

> *sed mea fata moror, qui vos in tela furentis*
> *vocibus his teneo. veniam date bella trahenti:*
> *spe trepido…* (7.295-97)
>
> But I delay my destiny, who by my voice detain you raging into battle.
> Pardon one who puts off war: I tremble in expectation…

In other words, for a moment Caesar is his own *mora*: the act of envisioning bloodshed delays its very realization. This moment of hesitation is reminiscent of his delay at the Rubicon, except again developed brilliantly by the poet: now Caesar has fully internalized the *mora* of the *imago patriae*. Moreover, it is not dread at possibly destroying the republic that halts him, but the sheer delight in anticipating its destruction.

Yet this is also a brilliant rhetorical move by Caesar, for the more he lengthens his speech, the more rhetorical roadblocks or *morae* he adds, the more incensed he makes his army, as shown by *vos in tela furentis*. After all, Caesarian regeneration feeds on the presence of an obstacle. This technique not only works on his men, *spe trepido* shows that it affects Caesar himself as well.

Thus far there has been a paucity of formulaic verbs in his speech (i.e. *colligo, spargo*, or their synonyms). Only at the end of his speech does Caesar speak in such terms:

> *sternite iam vallum fossasque implete ruina,*

> *exeat ut plenis acies non sparsa maniplis.*
> *parcite ne castris: vallo tendetis in illo*
> *unde acies peritura venit.* (7.326-29)
>
> Now destroy the rampart and fill the ditches with rubble, so that the army proceeds in full formation and not scattered. Do not spare the camp: you will pitch camp inside that rampart from where the doomed army comes.

This statement, however, poses additional questions: why would Caesar say this, and more importantly, what effect would the army's destruction of its own encampment have on its own organization? For the first question, of the extant sources on the battle of Pharsalus, Appian is the only one besides Lucan who mentions this command of Caesar's.[6] The answer to the first question is, as Caesar says, psychological: it forces his men to be goal-oriented and not to think about the safety of their own barracks, and thus it induces them to fight harder to reach the opposition's quarters. As for the second question, the answer is dependent on the formula. The act of reducing their own camp to rubble would enable the army to organize themselves (*non sparsa*): their camp in effect acts as an internal obstacle, the destruction of which forces a gathering of their own energy.[7] Yet the answer to the first question is has a formulaic subtext: by ordering them to destroy their own barracks and thus leaving no place to return, Caesar enhances their desire to overflow. The conclusion of his speech is thus related to his earlier dismissal of the Pompeians as an effete barbarian rabble: they will put up only token resistance before his men slice through them on the way to Pompey's camp. Just as at Rome and Massilia,

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[6] App. *BC* 2.74.

[7] Thus in contrast to the usual conception of the formula, in which dissipation and laxness follows destruction. However, this is the case because Caesarian figures are facing the opposition; here, internal destruction fosters organization. Likewise, Caesar in his speech uses internal *mora* through his description of the bloody vision of the battle in order to fire his audience (and himself) up.

Caesar aims right at the heart. Likewise, before the climactic battle for world domination, Caesar stays as true as ever to the flooding paradigm outlined in Book 1.

Yet Caesar's wish is contradicted by his soldiers' actual behavior, for the destruction of their own camp does not produce the predicted outcome:

> *capiunt praesagia belli*
> *calcatisque ruunt castris; stant ordine nullo,*
> *arte ducis nulla, permittuntque omnia fatis.*
> *si totidem Magni soceros totidemque petentis*
> *urbis regna suae funesto in Marte locasses,*
> *non tam praecipiti ruerent in proelia cursu.* (7.331-36)
>
> They seize the portents of war and rush from their trampled camp; they stand in no order, with none of the general's skill, and permit everything to fate. If you had placed in deadly battle just as many fathers-in-law of Magnus and just as many seeking despotism over their own city, they would not rush into battle with such precipitous running.

Instead of filing out neatly as Caesar had wished, they stream out in a disorderly manner. At first glance this behavior is puzzling, even insane; a disorganized mob would be the last thing any Roman commander worth his salt would want at this precise moment. Yet what Lucan has done here is to abandon realistic description in favor of a totally formulaic picture. The words *ruunt* and *calcatis* begin the process: the latter is the army's "breakthrough" of their camp, and the former describes the beginning of their overflow. This is why there is no need for *ars*: once Caesar's men have gathered their *furor*, their breakthrough is as automatic as a natural phenomenon, needing no human guidance. In fact, this is where Lucan really takes the Caesarians beyond the bounds of the merely human and brings to realization what has been implied in all of Caesar's nature similes. Their disorganization is literally un-Roman, if not inhuman; at this moment the army has truly transcended its human bounds and come to resemble a force of nature as unstoppable as the Caesarian thunderbolt. Likewise, as in Book 1 above, *fata*

is the philosophical embodiment of the formula, the mysterious force that allows Caesar to prevail beyond all normal odds. Indeed, Caesar himself is conspicuously absent from these lines because he has literally *become* his army. This is an army of a thousand generals, each a copy of his own general, yet all rushing toward a common goal.[8] Caesar turns into "Caesar" as his essence is diffused into tens of thousands of bodies—the full glory of the formula in action.

When battle finally comes, it is under the sign of the Caesarian thunderbolt: *extremique **fragor** convexa irrumpit Olympi, / unde procul nubes, quo nulla tonitrua durant* ("a crashing bursts the vaults of uppermost Olympus, from where clouds are distant and where no thundering lasts," 7.478-79). These two lines are packed with meaning. First, *fragor* is a mild allusion to the bolt simile, specifically to the ability of the lightning bolt to stun the world: *aetheris impulsi sonitu mundique **fragore*** ("with a sound of ether struck and crashing of the world," 1.152).[9] Just as Caesar's hesitation at the Rubicon was a premonition of his hesitation before the battle, so the universal destruction caused by the lightning bolt is realized on the plain of Pharsalus. Furthermore, this thunderclap is detached from its mythological connections with Olympus and thus Jupiter, just as the Book 1 lightning bolt had no divine origin (or rather, as *in sua templa* suggested, it was openly hostile to Jupiter). Not only is it detached, but *irrumpit* indicates an actively hostile sonic penetration of Olympus: *rumpo* and its derivatives are always formulaic (as *irrumpo* at 2.441 above). Lucan is effectively

[8] A variation on Hardie's (1993) 7-8 "one as many" *topos*: here, the one (Caesar) becomes many.

[9] Lucan uses *fragor* a total of eight times, twice to describe Caesar's forces (6.163 and 6.225, both in the Scaeva episode). Except at 1.157, he does not use it to designate a thunderclap, but Vergil does at *Aen.* 2.692 and 8.527; cf. *Aen.* 9.541 (*caelum tonat omne fragore*) in relation to Lucan's examples of the word.

foreshadowing Caesar's "dethronement" of Jupiter, shortly after the narrator laments that worship of the emperor will displace that of the gods (7.457-59).[10]

In the usual Roman fashion, the battle is at first engaged through ranged weapons (7.485); however, the true outcome lies in close combat: *odiis solus civilibus ensis / sufficit, et dextras Romana in viscera ducit* ("the sword alone is enough for the citizens' hatred and leads their right hands into Roman guts," 7.490-91).[11] Here, Caesar wastes no time tearing into the other side: *praecipiti cursu vaesanum Caesaris agmen / in densos agitur cuneos* ("Caesar's insane columns are driven with headlong speed into the packed formations," 7.496-97). Pompey's forces, on the other hand, are massed so tightly that their free movement is impeded:

> *Pompei densis acies stipata catervis*
> *iunxerat in seriem nexis umbonibus arma,*
> *vixque habitura locum dextras ac tela movendi*
> *constiterat gladiosque suos compressa timebat*. (7.492-95)
>
> Pompey's forces, bunched-up in packed columns, had joined their shields in a row with overlapping bosses, and the men stood with hardly enough room to move their hands and weapons, and feared their own swords while being crushed.

This passage is worth quoting here since it shows a long-range structural link to Book 4. Pompey's troops find themselves in exactly the same position as Curio's when he was ambushed by Juba. Both are caught in a kind of anti-formulaic compression that actually harms them instead of increasing their energy. Indeed, Caesar's forces streaming out *ordine nullo* suggest that the right time to be compressed was before the battle; trying to force compression in the thick of battle itself merely presents an easier target for Caesar's

[10] As suggested in the introduction to Chapter 1, the theme of Jupiter's displacement is also found in Seneca, especially *Hercules Furens*, where Juno, in her opening monologue, fears that the eponymous hero will invade Olympus after having successfully penetrated the underworld.

[11] Hershkowitz (1998) 208-09 notes an allusion to the image of national suicide at 1.2-3.

flooding forces (indeed, at 9.30ff Lucan will cite the increased vulnerability of concentrating one's forces as a reason for Cato's avoidance of the open sea). After all, Caesarian energy needs a solid, coherent barrier to destroy. Finally, the allusion to Curio's demise also implicitly links Caesar to Juba. Caesar's victory here fulfills the African-Caesarian connection that was present since the Marius episode in Book 2.

The poet fills out the passage with symbolic detail:

> *qua torta graves lorica catenas*
> *opponit tutoque latet sub tegmine pectus,*
> *hac quoque perventum est ad viscera, totque per arma*
> *extremum est quod quisque ferit*. (7.498-501)
>
> Where twisted chainmail presents its heavy chains and the chest hides under a safe covering, here is where they reach the guts, and through so much armor each strikes the furthest point.

Latet is the verbal marker for the formulaic core: the fact that the Caesarians are able to pierce the vitals (*viscera*) of the Pompeians means that they score a decisive blow (in contrast, for example, to the mere flesh-wounds inflicted upon Scaeva). That the men choose to strike precisely where the armor is thickest, and that they succeed, is proof of the immense energy unleashed here. The Pompeians might as well not be wearing any armor at all, so easily do the weapons of Caesar's men pierce right to their center.[12] Hence, their paralysis is total:

> *civilia bella*
> *una acies patitur, gerit altera; frigidus inde*
> *stat gladius, calet omne nocens a Caesare ferrum.*
> *nec Fortuna diu rerum tot pondera vergens*
> *distulit ingentis fato torrente ruinas.* (7.501-05)
>
> One battle-line endures civil war, the other wages it; on this side the sword stands cold, yet all of Caesar's guilty steel is hot. And fortune, not long

[12] Leigh (1997) 216-17 notices the contrast between Caesar's leniency toward those would flee, as expressed in his pre-battle speech (7.318-19), and his men's frontal assault here.

> inclining so many weighty matters, scatters the enormous wreckage with a torrent of fate.

In contrast, Caesar's men slice through them with the fury of…water: *fato torrente*. No more clearly than here does Lucan show that Caesarian force is as successful as it is because of the usurpation of both fire and water, opposing elements though they be: they sweep the army away in a torrent, even though he still exhibits his affinity to fire (*calet*).[13]

By the time the fighting comes to the heart of Pompey's army, the language here gets more openly formulaic: *quod totos errore vago perfuderat agros / constitit hic bellum* ("the war that had flooded all the fields in aimless wandering made a stand here," 7.546-47). Caesar's overflow finally meets resistance here.[14] Since this is what he relishes, however, he comes into his role as an agitator:

> *hic Caesar, rabies populis stimulusque furorum,*
> *ne qua parte sui pereat scelus, agmina circum*
> *it vagus atque ignes animis flagrantibus addit.* (7.557-59)
>
> Here Caesar, a source of frenzy for the people and their goad to madness, wanders among the troops and adds fire to blazing minds, lest crime die out in any portion of his own army.

As is well recognized, at this climax within the climactic battle, Caesar is transformed into a Fury.[15] In addition, he also reveals his status as his army's core: he is the source of their *furor*. Just as the earth was able to replenish Antaeus' exhausted body, he is always ready to inject a supply of Caesarian energy into any section of his troops whose energy

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[13] The original meaning of *torrens* as oppressive heat also serves as a nice undertone, combining both water and fire in one destructive sweep.

[14] Dilke (1960) 140 notes the sense of *errore* as a flooding river.

[15] Morford (1996) 83 and Hardie (1993) 42. Feeney (1991) 296 compares Caesar's appearance here to an epic god, referring especially to 7.567-71.

might be flagging. *Pereat* vividly drives home the naturalistic conception, as though the different parts of his army were limbs or blazing fires.[16] Even *sui* is meaningful in its literal sense besides being a military idiom for one's own forces: as Caesar said in his pre-battle speech, the army is an extension of himself. The climax of Caesar's all-pervading madness comes at the end of the passage:

> *scit cruor imperii qui sit, quae viscera rerum,*
> *unde petat Romam, libertas ultima mundi*
> *quo steterit ferienda loco*. (7.579-81)
>
> He knows what the empire's lifeblood is, what the heart of the matter is, from which point to attack Rome, the spot where the world's remaining freedom stood as it must be struck.

What is striking is the cold rationality of his *furor*, the skill with which he can pinpoint the *viscera* of the Roman state, the senate (7.578). It is the same technique as his men used in the first encounter, except now handled by a master: Caesar's all-encompassing vision lets him direct his military force past the plebeian "covering" and into the senatorial guts just as his men thrust past the armor and into the literal vitals of their opponents. Lucan follows up this outcome after Pompey's flight from the battlefield: *tu, Caesar, in alto / caedis adhuc cumulo patriae per viscera vadis* ("you, Caesar, still proceed in a deep pile of slaughter among the guts of your fatherland," 7.721-22); Caesar has achieved the republic's disembowelment.

Thus he has destroyed the core of the republic. But a far more lucrative core awaits—the Pompeian camp and its accompanying treasure (just as Caesar was eager for Rome's own treasure in Book 3). Caesar exhorts his men to seize the opportunity *dum fortuna calet* ("while fortune is hot," 7.734); the verb again indicates that their *furor* has

[16] I thus render *pereat* according to *OLD* 1 and 6 instead of *OLD* 2 "be wasted," as Dilke (1960) 141 does.

not yet run its course. As he explains in his speech, *tot regum fortuna simul Magnique coacta / expectat dominos* ("the collected fortune of so many kings and Magnus awaits its masters," 7.743-44). *Coacta* serves a formulaic function here: this treasure represents all the substance or "energy" of the Pompeian side that has been gathered from both east and west (7.741-42), just as the Roman treasury that Lucan catalogues at 3.155ff has been collected from Gaul all the way to Pompey's eastern client kingdoms. In both cases, the treasure represents Roman imperial power; just as Caesar gains world rule by being victorious at Pharsalus, so he also gains the fruit of that *imperium* concentrated into one pile. The inclusion of this section is not superfluous: Lucan is drawing a clear parallel with Caesar's occupation of Rome in Book 3 and showing that Caesar has decisively demolished the republican cause, first by eviscerating Rome itself and then by doing the same to the "Rome in exile." There can be no more regeneration of the Pompeians for the rest of the epic.

3. Caesar at Troy: New Paradigms

Having left Caesar among the corpses at Pharsalus, Lucan focuses the next two books on Pompey and Cato respectively. When Caesar reappears at the end of Book 9, the circumstances have changed:

> *Caesar, ut Emathia satiatus clade recessit,*
> *cetera curarum proiecit pondera soli*
> *intentus genero; cuius vestigia frustra*
> *terris sparsa legens fama duce tendit in undas…* (9.950-53)
>
> As Caesar withdrew, fulfilled by Emathian slaughter, he discarded his other concerns, concentrating only on his son-in-law, whose traces scattered over the earth he reads in vain with rumor as his guide, as he aims for the waters…

These lines not only reintroduce Caesar into the narrative after an absence of nearly two books, but they are also packed with motifs and themes that will be continued in the last book. In effect, they act as a sort of introduction to the world after Pharsalus and to Caesar's role within it. Both the world and Caesar have changed since that battle. After releasing a monumental torrent at Pharsalus, he is *satiatus*, or in other words, dormant. However, Caesar is still as focused on Pompey as ever, since at this point he is ignorant of his adversary's death. Yet at the same time, it is clear that Pompey can no longer pose a meaningful threat, which allows Caesar to maintain a relaxed demeanor. We have already seen this in Book 3 when Caesar entered Rome, but now he will remain in this state for a longer period of time because he has essentially won the civil war and can thus spend extended amounts of time separated from his army. He thus has no occasion or ability to regenerate until the second half of Book 10, when his life is truly in danger.

In addition, the nature of his target has changed. After Pharsalus, the republican forces are now mere fragments; moreover, Pompey himself has already gone to his grave. In this context, *vestigia* here takes on a deeper sense than merely the literal signs of Pompey's sojourn through the Mediterranean: it also signifies the remnants or "ruins" of Pompey himself. Caesar of course does not yet know that Pompey is dead, but having lines 9.950-53 lead directly into the Troy episode allows Pompey's *vestigia* to be subsumed into Troy's. Caesar may actually be tracking his footsteps or other evidence of Pompey's presence, but the reader's awareness of Pompey's death lets allows *vestigia* to be interpreted as traces of something that no longer exists (*OLD* 7). Through this ironic distance between Caesar and the reader, Lucan lets us see the basic identity of Caesar's response to Pompey both alive and dead, even if Caesar is not aware of this himself. In

the process, Pompey's individual identity is merged into remnants of distant antiquity, an enormous leap in time that is encapsulated in the single word *vestigia*. Lucan had already begun to practice this temporal compression on Pompey when he had Cordus write the epitaph *hic situs est Magnus* (8.793), which encompasses within itself the eroding process of time, from "here lies Magnus" to "here a great man is buried," and finally "here is a great site."[17] This "abstraction" of Pompey here paves the way for an identification of his *caput* with the Nile's in Book 10.

The fading away of Pompey's individuality as he turns into a ruin results in the domination of the narrative voice (here represented by the Trojan *incola*), for without a visible sign indicating his presence, Pompey's *fama* must depend on rhetoric for survival. *Fama* thus links Pompey and Troy: just as Pompey's reputation leads Caesar onwards in pursuit (*fama duce*), that of the ancient city now occupies his time: *Sigeasque petit famae mirator harenas* ("and as an admirer of fame he seeks the Sigean sands," 9.961). Caesar's status as a sightseer has two paradoxically opposed consequences. On the one hand he seems now to revel in *mora* and leisure, a drastic inversion of his attitude during wartime.[18] This carries the danger of stagnation and of being sidetracked, such as when Caesar dallies with Cleopatra in Book 10; recall that in his Book 3 simile he said that without an enemy, his strength would dissolve. On the other hand, Caesar's dormancy also exhibits an intense curiosity new to him in the epic, which is a sign of his formulaic regeneration crossing over into the intellectual realm. In both Troy and Egypt, he will now gather knowledge, not energy. Having physically become master of the world at

[17] Ormand (1994) 49.

[18] Indeed, Caesar is aware of his own inertia: Lucan describes him after the Troy episode as *avidusque urguente procella / Iliacas pensare moras* ("and with the gale forcing him, eager to compensate for Trojan delays," 9.1001-02).

Pharsalus, he now faces cultures older than Rome: without being able to overpower them by force, he must find other methods to deal with them. If Lucan intended to continue the epic beyond its present endpoint, perhaps Book 9 could have been the beginning of another formulaic arc (after the first, which ended decisively at Pharsalus); only this time, it is not mere regeneration of his own energy, but a desire to strengthen himself even more by absorbing from alien cultures whatever he can use, whether it be the Trojan link to Aeneas or Egypt's wealth.

Accordingly, Lucan describes Caesar's attitude toward the ruins of Troy: *circumit exustae nomen memorabile Troiae / magnaque Phoebei quaerit vestigia muri* ("he goes around the noteworthy name of burned-out Troy and seeks the great remnants of Apollo's wall," 9.964-65).[19] Here *vestigia* reminds the reader of the same word used for Pompey earlier (*magna* is an extra touch). In addition, *nomen* is one of the Pompeian terms *par excellence* (cf. Lucan's description of him as *magni nominis umbra*, "shadow of a great name," 1.135).[20] In addition, the expression itself is paradoxical: how can Caesar physically walk around a *nomen*? *Circumire* is a perfect example of the ambiguous aspect of Caesar as tourist. On the one hand, the sense that best fits here is "to go around" or "visit the round of" (*OLD* 1 or 6), notwithstanding the insubstantiality of *nomen*. However, another, metaphorical connotation actually makes more sense with *nomen*: that is, "to surround/encircle" (*OLD* 4). Caesar cannot attack an abstraction directly, but must use an indirect approach, thus ironically imitating Hercules' method of defeating Antaeus. One knows that circumstances are no longer the same when Caesar

[19] Caesar's visit to Troy has been perhaps the most-discussed episode of Book 9: see Ahl (1976) 214-22, Zwierlein (1986), Ormand (1994) 50-54, Bartsch (1997) 131-35, Rossi (2001), Seng (2003), Gowing (2005) 88-92, Eigler (2005) and Tesoriero (2005).

[20] As Ahl (1976) 215 observes.

begins to resemble a figure who defeated his formulaic forebear. Yet at the same time that the literal meaning indicates Caesar's surface caution, the figurative meaning expresses his still-smoldering aggression, now channeled into intellectual inquisitiveness. This is exactly the same situation in which Caesar will find himself when facing Acoreus in the next book: there, the roundabout motion of *circumire* will be increased into encirclement, as Caesar tries to contain the Nile in his mind, which, like Troy, he will only be able to experience verbally. There is a formulaic component to all of this: by being a passive recipient of knowledge, Caesar is becoming an obstacle, but one who tries to contain the verbal flooding of knowledge. In other words, he is practicing both a defensive and an offensive posture.

However, the main flaw in Caesar's approach is that it hands the initiative over to his interlocutor. The speaker gains much more leverage than a physical opponent would against him because he can choose what or how much to reveal, and Caesar is left helpless because he cannot do anything but listen.[21] In other words, the balance of power now begins to shift against Caesar. This change is not yet complete at Troy, however:[22]

> *inscius in sicco serpentem pulvere rivum*
> *transierat, qui Xanthus erat. securus in alto*
> *gramine ponebat gressus: Phryx incola manes*
> *Hectoreos calcare vetat. discussa iacebant*
> *saxa nec ullius faciem servantia sacri:*
> *'Herceas' monstrator ait 'non respicis aras?'* (9.974-79)

[21] Rossi (2001) 316-17 argues that *aspicit* at 9.970 indicates a subtle shift in perspective to Caesar, so that the sites mentioned in the rest of the passage correspond to what he actually sees—thus indicating that he is not as ignorant as assumed, but only seeing what he wishes to (i.e. the sins of the descendants of Dardanus who are not also ancestors of the Julii). Thus, she must explain Caesar's sudden lapse into ignorance at 9.976-77 and 9.979 as willful; this is an ingenious theory, but perhaps overly complicated, and one which Tesoriero (2005) 207-208 nn.21-23 rebuts.

[22] Rossi (2001) 323 rightly observes that the altar of Jupiter Herceus recalls Pompey's death because it was the site of Priam's murder; she also makes the connection between the altar's virtual nonexistence and the similar condition of Pompey's tomb at 8.820-22.

> Ignorant, he crosses the stream winding in the dry dust, which was Xanthus. Heedlessly he placed his footsteps in the tall grass: a Phrygian inhabitant forbids him to tread on Hector's shade. Scattered rocks were lying there, preserving no appearance of anything sacred: the guide says, "Do you not take heed of the Hercean altars?"

Caesar's guide is only able to speak one sentence, and it is to reproach Caesar *after* he has walked over the now-absent ruins (*securus* here reflects the supreme indifference of the tyrant, as shown by Sulla in the Book 2 digression). In fact, Lucan himself at 9.966-73 describes the ruins of Troy, not the *incola*. But this is perhaps the point: Lucan (or his narrative voice) effectively takes the role of Caesar's "interlocutor" here.[23] It is no accident that right after the above passage he addresses Caesar in his famous apostrophe, in which he admonishes him not to be jealous of *fama*: *invidia sacrae, Caesar, ne tangere famae* (9.982). This is the same *fama* of Troy as of Pompey, the former as narrated here and the latter already having been eulogized at the end of Book 8. Both the narrator and the *incola* preserve a memory of figures and objects either overlooked or trampled by Caesar, thus preserving a space, even if not in the physical world, where an alternative to the dominant Caesarian worldview can still exist.[24]

However, because Lucan's narrative voice is addressed to the reader, Caesar remains unaffected.[25] He has his own plans for the future of Troy, plans which the poet describes as *non irrita* (9.989), indicating the failure of the *incola* to dissuade him in any fashion. Instead, he claims Aeneas for himself (*Aeneaeque mei…lares*, "and the

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[23] Green (1991) 252; Ormand (1994) 50.

[24] This is basically Bartsch's (1997) 134 viewpoint; though she deems that the reality of the ruins is impossible to retrieve, she still sees the act of remembrance as worthwhile. Ormand (1994) 52 is more pessimistic, suggesting that the view constructed by the reader is just as limited as Caesar's.

[25] Although, as Tesoriero (2005) 209 states, he can only make the following speech due to information imparted by the *incola*.

household gods of my Aeneas," 9.991-92).[26] In fact, the whole speech has a formulaic undertone fully revealed at its conclusion:

> *date felices in cetera cursus,*
> *restituam populos; grata vice moenia reddent*
> *Ausonidae Phrygibus, Romanaque Pergama surgent.* (9.997-99)
>
> Give me favorable outcomes in what remains, and I will restore your people; the Ausonians will gratefully return to the Phrygians their walls, and Roman Pergamum will rise.

By desiring to restore Troy to its former glory, Caesar is arresting the natural process of history whereby civilizations decline and disappear, thus bringing Troy into his own dynamic of Caesarian regeneration.[27] He is not merely trying to gather his own scattered energy, but sweeping his net more widely to encompass the mythical ancestral homeland of the Romans. These are *di cinerum* ("gods of the ashes," 9.990) now, but Caesar wants to reignite these cold ashes. What Caesar wants is to reverse the linear progression of history from Troy to Rome embodied in the *Aeneid*. This is what happens to history under the sign of Caesar: it now moves cyclically in synchronization with the cycle of the formula.[28] What *Romana Pergama* really means is not just that a new Troy will be

[26] Ormand (1994) 51 notes that Caesar reads selectively, only noticing the Troy of the *Aeneid* at 9.966ff; Quint (1993) 7 observes that Caesar's phrasing suggests that he himself has read the *Aeneid*, an observation that adds to the already complex metaliterary features of this scene.

[27] Zwierlein (1986) 475 does not take Caesar's pledge seriously on the grounds that he has already destroyed Rome at Pharsalus; this may be true, but the key point is that Caesar's reimagining of Troy as Roman is an example of merging or hybridization that will occur under his rule, of a piece with his desire, expressed in Book 10, to introduce Egyptian luxury into Rome, a process the narrator sees as contamination (cf. the foreign masses swarming to Rome at 7.405).

[28] As Ahl (1976) 221 notes.

Roman, but also that a reborn Troy will be subsumed into a Caesarian Rome during his coming regeneration.[29]

4. Caesar in Egypt

Introduction

Caesar's arrival at Egypt prompts an important opening section from Lucan, almost in the manner of a proem:

> *Ut primum terras Pompei colla secutus*
> *attigit et diras calcavit Caesar harenas,*
> *pugnavit fortuna ducis fatumque nocentis*
> *Aegypti, regnum Lagi Romana sub arma*
> *iret, an eriperet mundo Memphiticus ensis*
> *victoris victique caput.* (10.1-6)
>
> When Caesar first reached land and trod upon the dreadful sands in his pursuit of Pompey's head, the general's fortune and the fate of baneful Egypt struggled as to whether Lagus' kingdom would succumb to Roman force, or whether the sword of Memphis would rob the world of the heads of both the conqueror and the conquered.

Lucan wants to set up a titanic conflict between Caesar and Egypt. The second line is especially pregnant in this regard: *diras, calcavit,* and *harenas*. *Harenas* in Lucan should never be taken lightly: not only does it indicate both the foreign soil against which Caesar struggle, but also suggests that Egypt is going to be a site of contest and conflict. *Diras*, of course, stresses the imposing nature of Egypt, which has already vanquished one

[29] Ahl (1976) 222 rightly comments that this is a "new, if bizarre beginning"; Green (1991) 252 similarly sees a transition from Caesar's destructive capacity here into one of renewal, but she misses the point in saying that he is merely re-founding Rome; see also Rossi (2001) 325. For the rumor that the historical Caesar wished to make Troy the new capital of the empire, see Suet. *Div. Iul.* 79. Tesoriero (2005) 213-14 sees Lucan as looking ahead to Augustan preoccupations of blending Rome with Troy.

Roman and is now about to take the measure of his successor.[30] That this is going to be no easy task for Caesar is signaled by Lucan's matchup (as a *par*) of his *fortuna* against Egypt's *fatum*. Lucan does not use these terms casually here: Caesar has relied on the fickle goddess for success his entire career, but can she rescue him one final time? The phrase *fatum nocentis Aegypti*, though vague, suggests an answer in the negative. However, Caesar is not exactly going to be a pushover: note *calcavit*. Lucan seems to favor this verb: it occurs a total of eighteen times in the epic;[31] for the most part, it is an eminently Caesarian word.[32] In spite of his seeming relaxation after Pharsalus, Caesar's innate tendencies still die hard; we will see that he is simply biding his time and channeling them into new forms. Finally, on a global scale, Caesar is doing his part to scatter the civil war by extending it to non-Roman territory. This has already happened in Book 9 with Cato, and Pompey had the same idea in mind when he was contemplating the Parthians as reinforcements in Book 8. Much like the Nile, there is no stopping the surge of civil war once it has finally broken through at Pharsalus.[33]

Lest we focus too much on the confrontation between Caesar and Egypt, the very first line reminds us of his original purpose, which is his pursuit of Pompey. Yet this

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[30] Berti (2000) 62 notes that *diras* refers to Egypt as the cause of Pompey's death, but fails to note the adjective's potential as foreshadowing the conflict with Caesar. Schmidt (1986) 13-14 thinks likewise, though both remark on the foreshadowing of this phrase at 8.712 (*ante tamen Pharias victor quam tangat harenas*, "however, before the victory touches Pharian sands") and 8.805 (*Magne, metu nullas Nili calcemus harenas*, "Magnus, let us tread none of the Nile's sands in fear").

[31] Lucan may have been influenced by Ovid's usage of the word: it occurs fifteen times in the Ovidian *corpus*, while Vergil only uses it twice.

[32] Besides 10.2, Lucan uses *calco* of Caesar or those in his camp at 6.219, 7.332, 7.293, 7.749, 9.977, and 9.1044. Even though it describes Pompey in the last line of the epic, there he is behaving in a Caesarian manner: see below and Chapter 5.

[33] It can be said that the civil war has involved non-Romans as far back as Caesar's engagement with the Massilians in Book 3, but only after Pharsalus have the protagonists considered engaging nations outside the Roman *imperium*.

goal has been transformed with the latter's death: instead of following Pompey, Caesar is now following his head (*colla secutus*). This is more than just a mannerist turn of phrase: with the separation of Pompey's head from his body, its value as a prize can now be transferred to another object. Therefore, this line is crucial as an intermediate step in linking Caesar's desire for Pompey's *caput* to that of the Nile.

However, this quest must take a decidedly less aggressive turn. On landing at Alexandria, Caesar immediately faces the discontent of its residents: *sed fremitus vulgi fasces et iura querentis / inferri Romana suis discordia sensit / pectora et ancipites animos, Magnumque perisse / sibi* ("but he perceived the crowd's rumbling, which complained that the rods and Roman law were being inflicted on their own; he sensed their discordant minds and doubtful spirits; he sensed that Magnus did not die for him," 10.11-14). Caesar must tread cautiously:

> *Tum vultu semper celante pavorem*
> *intrepidus superum sedes et templa vetusti*
> *numinis antiquas Macetum testantia vires*
> *circumit…* (10.14-17)
>
> Then, his face always concealing fear, he fearlessly walks around the dwellings of gods and the temples of ancient divinity testifying to the Macedonians' ancient power…

The return of *circumire* is no coincidence: just as at Troy, Caesar is encountering an ancient civilization.[34] The verb thus fits the literal physical action of sightseeing; however, its figurative sense of caution has even more relevance here, given the hostility of the citizenry toward him. Thus, Caesar must take the indirect approach, which inevitably involves concealing his characteristic force. Yet he must also take care not to reveal any sense of fear that might result from recognition of this hostility (*vultu semper*

[34] As Schmidt (1986) 26 and Zwierlein (1986) 467-68 note.

celante pavorem). Yet Lucan is coy about the issue; he seems to want to have it both ways with Caesar, for how can he be described as *intrepidus* if he truly is afraid?

This matter might be further clarified in reference to the formula. If one recalls, the original simile in Book 1 depicted the standard cycle of outburst followed by shattering and regeneration. However, in the catalogue of omens in Book 1 foreshadowing Caesar's approach to Rome, Lucan showed us a celestial fire that could take the shape both of a piercing javelin as well as an amorphous light (1.531-32). There seems to be a tension between the formula as *determining* Caesar's behavior (in which the dormant phase is a real weakness), and the formula as *determined* by Caesar (wherein the dormant phase serves as a cloak of apparent weakness behind which he can hide his full strength, in this respect bringing it closer to the model of the core). *Intrepidus* encapsulates this ambiguity: ostensibly it refers to his surface impassivity (*OLD* 1b), but the basic sense of truly "fearless" (*OLD* 1a) is too strong to dismiss here. No example could better show the liminality of the dormant phase, in that Caesar is simultaneously at his weakest while also having the most potential.

The Alexander Digression

Appropriately for a recent conqueror of the world, the first thing Caesar does in Alexandria is to visit Alexander the Great's underground tomb; Lucan's comments to this effect (*nulla captus dulcedine rerum*, "taken in by no pleasantries," 10.17) emphasize the importance of this act to Caesar.[35] The Macedonian conqueror was of course a model for Pompey, but whether the historical Caesar looked to Alexander in a similar fashion is

[35] Zwierlein (1986) 468-89 and Seng (2003) 131-32 find links between the Alexander episode and Caesar's visit to Troy, the seeing Caesar as third in a line after Achilles and Alexander.

doubtful at best.[36] However, this connection is too tempting for Lucan to resist. The clearest verbal link he draws between them is to match his description of Alexander as a *sidus iniquum / gentibus* ("a star harmful to mankind," 10.35-36) with Cleopatra's invocation of Caesar as an *aequum / sidus* ("righteous star," 10.89-90). In addition, the poet's designation of Alexander as *fulmenque quod omnis / percuteret pariter populos* ("a thunderbolt that would blast all peoples equally," 10.34-35) alludes to the Caesarian lightning bolt. However, there are also subtle hints of the Macedonian's formulaic behavior, such as *Macetum fines latebrasque suorum / deseruit* ("he abandoned the borders of Macedon and the recesses of his own people," 10.28-29). Just as the lightning bolt burst from its cloud haven, so Alexander breaks out from dormancy in his lair to wreak havoc upon the world. In addition, *sacratis totum spargenda per orbem / membra viri posuere adytis* ("the man's limbs, to be scattered through the world, were laid in a sacred sanctuary," 10.22-23) has formulaic overtones in suggesting that while Alexander ought to have been scattered into oblivion, he is still whole (if embalmed), enabling would-be successors like Caesar to pay homage and thus "regenerate" themselves through his example.

Another similarity between the two is their antagonism toward rivers (as will be seen in the next chapter): *ignotos miscuit amnes / Persarum Euphraten, Indorum sanguine Gangen* ("he mingled unknown rivers with blood: the Euphrates with the Persians' and the Ganges with the Indians'." 10.32-33). Alexander does more than Caesar against rivers by polluting them with blood: in this respect he is more like Sulla, since the blood shed by his proscriptions forces its way into the Tiber in the Book 2

[36] Green (1978) definitively demonstrates that Alexander-*aemulatio* is a product of literary imagination and has little basis in the historical record.

flashback. What is interesting is the mention of the Ganges: here, Lucan describes it as one of Alexander's victims, while in Book 3 he singles it out as a river that was able to defy the general (3.233-34).

Yet Lucan takes care to note that Alexander's inability to see the Nile also connects him to Caesar (as will be proven in the Acoreus episode). *Nilumque a fonte bibisset* ("he would have drunk the Nile at its source," 10.40) is more thematically relevant, though, since Caesar will frame his own curiosity about the Nile's source as a desire to "receive" the Nile into himself, thus revealing that he possesses a thirst as rabid as Alexander's underneath the guise of respectable intellectual inquiry. In any case, Lucan stresses that in the end Alexander could not conquer *natura* (both his own mortality as well as the natural world), just as Caesar will not be able to discover the Nile's secrets. Finally, though Alexander himself may be intact, his empire quickly broke up after his death: *nulloque herede relicto / totius fati lacerandas praebuit urbes* ("and with no heir of his entire destiny remaining, he left his cities to be torn apart," 10.44-45). This statement can be interpreted historically, with the collapse of Rome into another civil war after Caesar's death, but it can also be viewed formulaically: Alexander's achievement quickly disintegrated after the overwhelming force that he displayed in assembling it. In this respect, Ptolemaic Egypt is one of the "shards" of the former empire, never to be reunited with its other pieces, and thus it has lain dormant for centuries. Caesar's experience in Egypt will soon show just how decadent it has become.

In general, the Alexander digression encapsulates in miniature the path of Caesar's career: rapid world domination and destruction followed by sudden death. For both men, the Nile plays a role in halting their seemingly unstoppable trajectory. Thus,

this section serves a "counter-didactic" purpose to what Caesar might gain by visiting the tomb of Alexander. Instead of having him make a grand proclamation such as Caesar makes at the site of Troy, Lucan pointedly denies him a voice here; his silence here foreshadows his later silence after Acoreus' speech.

Caesar and Cleopatra

As the narrative progresses, Lucan also reveals the ambiguity of Caesar's condition on the political level. At issue is whether he or the court is preeminent; is he their *maior potestas* ("greater power," 10.136)? On this question, the details are vague: even though Caesar is safe because he takes Ptolemy hostage (*obside quo pacis Pellaea tutus in aula / Caesar erat*, "with him as hostage of peace, Caesar was safe in the Pellaean court," 10.55-56), yet just a few lines later Cleopatra sneaks into Alexandria unbeknownst to Caesar (*ignaro Caesare*, "without Caesar's knowledge," 10.58). *Ignarus* continues the portrait of Caesar seen above at Troy, where Lucan labeled him *inscius*. Dormancy brings sluggishness and distraction; Caesar is not as sharp as he was before Pharsalus (nor, of course, has he encountered a figure—not to mention a woman—as formidable as Cleopatra).[37] In fact, he seems to be behaving more like Pompey in being out of touch (as will be seen in Chapter 5); at any rate (as will be seen below) Pothinus, the chief plotter of the plot against Caesar's life, seems to think so.

Lucan's description of Cleopatra explicitly shows the waning of Caesar's power:

> *terruit illa suo, si fas, Capitolia sistro*
> *et Romana petit imbelli signa Canopo*
> *Caesare captivo Pharios ductura triumphos…* (10.63-65)

[37] He is virtually, as Zwierlein (1974) 55 says, a slave of luxury.

> She terrified the Capitol with her rattle (if such a thing was possible) and attacked Roman standards with unwarlike Canopus, intending to lead Pharian triumphs with a captive Caesar…

In this fantasy of a female triumph, Caesar would descend even further, going from merely *ignarus* to *captivus*.[38] This scenario almost exactly foreshadows his lieutenant's dalliance with Cleopatra a decade later; small wonder that Lucan excuses Antony if even Caesar's *durum…pectus* (10.71-72) can succumb to Cleopatra's wiles.[39]

Caesar willingly engages in that Lucanian sin, mixture—the dissolving of distinctions or *modi*: *hoc animi nox illa dedit quae prima cubili / miscuit incestam ducibus Ptolemaida nostris* ("that night, which first in bed mixed the unchaste daughter of Ptolemy with our generals, gave her this spirit," 10.68-69).[40] *Hoc animi* refers to the fantasy triumph above, now clearly revealed to be Cleopatra's quasi-sexual fantasy. There are multiple exchanges and transformations going on here: Cleopatra's sexual conquest of Caesar inspires her dreams of military domination. Conversely, Caesar's military *furor* is now transformed into sexual *furor* (*et in media rabie medioque furore…adulter / admisit Venerem curis*, "in the midst of madness and frenzy…the adulterer made room for lust among his concerns," 10.72-75). Cleopatra's private world intrudes upon Caesar (*et miscuit armis / illicitosque toros et non ex coniuge partus*, "and

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[38] Berti (2000) 100-01 notes the incongruity of *Pharios* and *triumphos*, the triumph being an arch-Roman institution: here is an example of Roman-Egyptian mixture of the sort we will see later in the banquet. He also sees *Romana…signa* conquered by *imbelli…Canopo* as showing evidence of Cleopatra's ridiculously inflated pretensions, but it seems rather to show Caesar's real weakness in Book 10 that such a thought could even be entertained. I thus cannot agree with his assertion that *Caesare* here must refer to Octavian, though Lucan may indeed be alluding to the literary precedent of Cleopatra's plans to dominate Rome (e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 1.37.6-8 and Ov. *Met.* 15.826-28).

[39] Zwierlein (1974) 58 argues that Lucan is projecting propaganda accounts by Octavian of Antony's relationship with Cleopatra back to his predecessor. In literary terms, Lucan is also drawing on Aeneas' relationship with Dido: Turner (2010) 205 n.40 compares Caesar's forgetfulness at 10.77-78 with Aeneas' at *Aen.* 4.220-21.

[40] For literal and figurative mixing in Lucan, see Masters (1992) 111 and 171; see also Saylor (1986).

mingled with war forbidden affairs and offspring from no wife," 10.75-76) and forces him to channel his energies and *furor* into a pursuit that harms his political and military interests.[41]

It is not only the Egyptians who benefit from Caesar's dissipation: *partesque fugatas / passus in extremis Libyae coalescere regnis* ("and allowing the scattered party to unite in the outermost kingdoms of Libya," 10.78-79). *Coalescere* is a passive synonym of the original formulaic verb *colligere*: thus, Caesar's dalliance with Cleopatra encourages the regeneration of the republicans. While he wanes, they wax; *extremis…regnis* also reminds us that the Libyan desert is the ideal site of dormancy and regeneration; Cato's choice of this *echt*-Caesarian location to train his men makes his desert journey fundamentally problematic, as we will see. Ironically, it is Caesar who should be in Libya, according to his Marian pedigree; instead his ideological opponent has usurped this refuge for himself. Meanwhile, Caesar is spending time in the wrong barbarian land—one that drains his energy instead of replenishing it.

Now as demonstrated in the previous chapter, Caesar is already a past master at deception, at hiding the aggression of the formula under a peaceful veneer when necessity demands it. However, Egypt itself is no stranger to such behavior, for it is permeated on all levels by ambiguity. For example, Cleopatra persuades Caesar to aid her in taking the throne with the statement *nullo discrimine sexus / reginam scit ferre Pharos* ("Pharos knows how to endure a queen with no distinction of gender," 10.91-92). Such boundary confusion will be displayed in full magnificence at the banquet. In this respect, Rome

[41] Ahl (1976) 226 recognizes the distracting effect of Cleopatra and the rest of the court on Caesar; he posits influence from *Aen*. 1 and 4 in terms of the similar corrupting of a barbarian queen on the Roman hero.

and Caesar have much to learn: *explicuitque suos magno Cleopatra tumultu / nondum translatos Romana in saecula luxus* ("and Cleopatra with great commotion displayed her own luxuries, not yet transported to Roman times," 10.109-110). Apart from the formulaic concerns of Caesar specifically, Egypt is much farther down the path of decadence due to the pervasiveness of *luxuria*. In formulaic terms, it has lost far more energy than Rome, which has only begun to feel the stifling domination of Caesar.

The Banquet

Lucan vividly describes the palace's overwhelming luxury:

> *ipse locus templi, quod vix corruptior aetas*
> *extruat, instar erat, laqueataque tecta ferebant*
> *divitias crassumque trabes absconderat aurum.*
> *nec summis crustata domus sectisque nitebat*
> *marmoribus, stabatque sibi non segnis achates*
> *purpureusque lapis, totaque effusus in aula*
> *calcabatur onyx; hebenus Meroitica vastos*
> *non operit postes sed stat pro robore vili,*
> *auxilium, non forma, domus*. (10.111-19)
>
> The very place was the likeness of a temple which a more corrupt era could hardly build: the paneled ceilings bore riches and the thick gold hid the beams. Nor did the house gleam, encrusted with cut marble on the surface; agate, not inactive, stood on its own; purple stone and onyx were trodden upon, strewn over the entire court; Meroë's ebony does not conceal enormous door-posts but stands in place of cheap wood—the house's support, not its decoration.

Aside from the obvious luxury, what is striking about Lucan's description of the banquet hall is its confusion of norms on various levels. First, they are dining in a palace that resembles a temple.[42] Thus, it suggests the blasphemy (to a Roman) of the Egyptian

[42] Schmidt (1986) 193 contrasts this palace's *luxuria* with the austerity of Jupiter Ammon's temple in Book 9; however, using this comparison to differentiate Caesar and Cato is not unproblematic given Cato's antagonistic stance to Ammon. Only Plut. *Caes.* 49 mentions a banquet for the reconciliation of Cleopatra

royals as living gods, while the gods themselves are reduced to food: *multas volucresque ferasque / Aegypti posuere deos* ("the Egyptians laid out many birds and beasts—their gods," 10.158-59).[43] What is most striking, though, is that even the architecture reflects Egyptian flux. Just as Cleopatra puts on an attractive face, so the gold conceals plain wooden beams—a physical representation of deception.[44] The architecture takes this paradigm further: the agate and the *lapis* do not serve merely as decorative surface, but actually are the main support materials (*stabatque sibi*), along with ebony. It is not merely a case of reversal, in that plain materials conceal costly ones; it is that what should be mere decoration or *forma* also serves as the core. As a result, neither Egypt nor its people seem to possess a true center, but are all surface.

The attendants of the banquet are no less motley: *discolor hos sanguis, alios distinxerat aetas* ("multicolored blood distinguished some, age distinguished others," 10.128). Both Libyan and Germanic (if this is what 10.129-30 implies) are present, visitors from the antipodes of the world. Again, this foreshadows what Rome will become as the capital of a universal empire: Egypt has already trodden this path.[45] In fact, this medley of races and cultures is exactly what the narrator predicts will be the result of Caesar's victory at Pharsalus: *nulloque frequentem / cive suo Romam sed mundi faece repletam* ("and Rome, teeming not with her own citizens but stuffed with the dregs of the world," 7.404-05). Cleopatra herself is decked out in finery from the four corners

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and Ptolemy, but without supplying any detail; Berti (2000) 122 posits the banquet of Aeneas and Dido at *Aen.* 1.637ff as the most likely literary model.

[43] It also reinforces the idea of Egypt as the "future" of Rome, which will one day also mingle royalty and divinity by worshipping emperors as gods (see the narrator's outburst at 7.459).

[44] Berti (2000) 128, finding a parallel at Sen. *Ep.* 115.9.

[45] As Ahl (1976) 229 notes.

of the globe: trinkets from the Red Sea (10.139), Phoenician thread (10.141), and a comb from the Seres—all symbolically unified by an Egyptian needle (*Nilotis acus*, 10.142). Rome will likewise draw from these foreign lands for her luxuries.[46]

The description of Phoenician thread is also an occasion for a satirical comment: *candida Sidonio perlucent pectora filo* ("her white breast is visible through Sidonian thread," 10.141). Lucan is playing on the sense of *candida* here, which can take a sense of being morally upright (*OLD* 8b), which Cleopatra is certainly not; he may also be parodying the elegiac *candida puella*.[47] In addition, *perlucent pectora* plays on literal and figurative senses: her clothing is transparent or translucent, which is morally shocking, yet figuratively it is a negation of the *lack* of transparency of her inner thoughts. The inversion here is that what counts is the transparency of her flesh (*pectora* literally), not her intentions, which would make her honest and noble (*pectora* figuratively).[48]

All this luxury fires up Caesar:

> *pro caecus et amens*
> *ambitione furor, civilia bella gerenti*
> *divitias aperire suas, incendere mentem*
> *hospitis armati*. (10.146-49)
>
> What madness, blind and insane with ambition, is it to reveal their treasures to one waging civil war, to inflame the mind of an armed guest.

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[46] Turner (2010) 206-08 suggests that the description of Cleopatra's jewelry and clothing would have resonated with Lucan's contemporary audience in the light of Roman imports from the east. For Roman trade with its eastern frontiers and beyond, see e.g. Ferguson (1978), Ball (2000) 123-39, and Butcher (2003) 180-89.

[47] *Candida* is a constant epithet of the elegiac poet's beloved, first appearing in elegiac meter at Catullus 68.70 (though *candida puella* is also found elsewhere in his *corpus* in poems 13 and 35), and found in every writer of elegy afterwards.

[48] Berti (2000) 143 notes that transparent clothing was not unknown among the elite of Lucan's time.

In contrast to Caesar's enfeebling *furor* while in the arms of Cleopatra, his *furor* is now oriented toward conquest as before (cf. 1.158-182 for greed as a factor in causing the civil war). Caesar is now gaining strength, planning his own future conquest of Egypt in direct contrast to Cleopatra's imagined victory over Rome:

> *discit opes Caesar spoliati perdere mundi*
> *et gessisse pudet genero cum paupere bellum*
> *et causas Martis Phariis cum gentibus optat.* (10.169-71)
>
> Caesar is learning to waste the wealth of a plundered world: he is ashamed to have waged war with a poor son-in-law and longs for reasons to make war on the Pharian race.

Lucan reveals that victory over Pompey was only the beginning of Caesar's mission, not its conclusion. Just as the ruins of Troy gave Caesar the impetus to a long-term goal of incorporating a rebuilt Troy into the empire, so encountering the wealth of Egypt kindles a similar desire in Caesar (which will be fulfilled when his adopted son Octavian finally conquers Egypt). Both locations thus spark an incipient regeneration of Caesar's aggression, and thus contribute to a formulaic recovery. Paradoxically, at the same time Egypt weakens and distracts him, it also re-energizes him.[49] As we will see in the next chapter, Caesar's query about the Nile's source is another manifestation of this altered aggression.

[49] Yet Ahl (1976) 227 also has a point when he says that Caesar is fundamentally "effeminized," since he now desires power for the sake of gold and not the opposite. Coffee (2009) 146 n.40 disagrees, arguing that Lucan softens the opprobrium toward Caesar by saying that traditional republican heroes such as Fabricius, Curius and Cincinnatus would react similarly in the presence of such wealth (10.151-54). In general, because Caesar is portrayed as a less dominant figure in Book 10, the result is that there is a rapprochement, however slight, between him and the republicans; this occurs as early as 10.6-7 when Lucan proclaims that Pompey's *umbra* will protect Caesar in this hostile environment. Such a shift in Lucan's framing of Caesar is motivated primarily by his involvement in Egypt: after all, Caesar naturally becomes more Roman in the presence of barbarian decadence. This issue however, especially lines 10.151-54, needs more discussion.

And yet, characteristically, Lucan embeds a message that once again brings back the issue of Caesar's softening to the forefront. The dinner guests drink a wine that is a mixture of vintages:

> *gemmaeque capaces*
> *excepere merum, sed non Mareotidos uvae,*
> *nobile sed paucis senium cui contulit annis*
> *indomitum Meroe cogens spumare Falernum.* (10.160-63)
>
> And the ample jeweled goblets received the wine, but not of Mareotic grape—it was well-known Falernian, to which Meroe, forcing it to foam, aged in a few years (though untamed).

Here Lucan brings together two objects that symbolize the domination of one culture by the other. The Egyptian climate causes the Falernian grape to ripen after only a few years, thus rendering *indomitum* ironic. *Senium*, however, adds a disturbing undertone: it suggests senility, perhaps even decadence. In particular, it is the same word Lucan uses to describe Acoreus and Pompey. One might say that the Egyptian climate causes the Italian grape to age prematurely, just as Egypt is draining Caesar of his energies.

The Plot against Caesar: Pothinus' Viewpoint

As we will see in the next chapter, Caesar and Acoreus' conversation is in fact a covert battle. Yet it is still a battle of wits, leaving Caesar oblivious of the looming danger: *sic velut in tuta securi pace trahebant / noctis iter mediae* ("Thus, as though secure in safe peace, did they lengthen the middle of the night," 10.332-33). *Securi* recalls Caesar's ill-advised confidence when entering Egypt at the beginning of Book 10 (such characteristic sang-froid in the face of mortal danger goes back to the simile in Book 1 in which the Libyan lion was *tanti securus vulneris*), a stroke of irony given the immediately following lines, which describe Pothinus' machinations. Recall as well that

Cleopatra's words of warning about the plot at 10.100-03 go curiously unheeded by Caesar (who in fact is silent again here; this curious feature of his in this book is perhaps part of Lucan's rhetorical strategy to portray him as out of touch). In addition, it also draws on the association of *securus* with figures in Lucan (precious few, to be sure) who are either uninvolved with civil war (like Amyclas, described as *securus belli* at 5.527) or who have abandoned it, like Pompey at Pharsalus (*securus abis*, 7.686). In this respect, Caesar was saying more than he knew when he proclaimed that he would abandon civil war if he knew the secrets of the Nile: by absorbing all this learning from Acoreus, he effectively has yielded the initiative to his enemies.

As for Pothinus, he too is a recipient of Pompey's ambiguous legacy: *habitant sub pectore manes / ultricesque deae dant in nova monstra furorem* ("ghosts live in his breast and the avenging goddesses give him madness for new abominations," 10.336-37). These *manes* are Pompey's, since Pothinus is responsible for his death (he makes a speech to this effect at 8.482-535). This shade, however, is a far cry from that at the beginning of Book 9, which ends up inside Cato and Brutus, or even the *umbra* that assists Caesar against men like Pothinus at the beginning of this book. Like the war itself, Pompey has shattered into diverging pieces, some Stoically oriented and others, as here, allied with the underworld and the Furies. Note, however, that these *manes* are anonymous; it seems that the "entropic" effect is at work with Pompey as well, to the point where this shade is so weakened and undifferentiated that it becomes generic and ordinary (even more so than the earlier shade at 10.73, which at least was named).

Meanwhile, Pothinus plots:

> *nec parat occultae caedem committere fraudi*
> *invictumque ducem detecto Marte lacessit.*

> *tantum animi delicta dabant ut colla ferire*
> *Caesaris et socerum iungi tibi, Magne, iuberet…* (10.345-48)
>
> Nor does he prepare to entrust slaughter to hidden treachery but harasses the unconquered general with open war. His crimes gave him so much courage that he ordered Caesar's neck to be struck and your father-in-law to be joined to you, Magnus…

He has such confidence that he would prefer to initiate open warfare rather than commit to subterfuge, which would presumably be the better strategy on account of Caesar's superior generalship. The clue may be found in the latter two lines above: by thinking of Caesar's execution specifically as decapitation, he joins Caesar figuratively to Pompey as a similar weakling at the same time he wants to join them together in the underworld.

The weakening of Caesar continues. In fact, Pothinus calls him another Pompey: *expugnare senem potuit Cleopatra venenis* ("Cleopatra was able to vanquish the old man with her poisons," 10.360): the use of *senem* to describe Caesar is a direct indication that to him, they are equally past their prime. Ironically, Pothinus views them as a matched pair in this sense: *quem metuis, par huius erat* ("he whom you fear was this one's equal," 10.382). Of course, the outcome will prove him wrong, but given Caesar's demeanor in this book so far, he can be forgiven for this impression. Finally, he even connects Caesar to one of Pompey's main thematic words:

> *quid nomina tanta*
> *horremus viresque ducis? quibus ille relictis*
> *miles erit.* (10.389-91)
>
> Why do you dread the leader's mighty name and strength? With these abandoned, he will be a soldier.

Just like Pompey was at the beginning of the epic, Pothinus now sees Caesar as nothing but an empty boast. Importantly, he also conflates the insubstantiality of the Pompeian

nomen with Caesar's very real military strengths: the removal of both renders him, of course, only a nameless *miles*. Pothinus is essentially using the same argument as the mutineers did in Book 5. The parallel is structurally significant: the fact that this comparison occurs in the two books that divide the epic exactly in half indicates that another great arc of the formula has wound down in Book 10. This book, in other words, is another book of crisis for Caesar and the formula, just as the fifth book was. Finally, Pothinus reduces him to nothing but a head: *et* [*nox*] *mittet ad umbras / quod debetur adhuc mundo caput* ("and [night] will send to the shades that head which is still owed to the world," 10.392-93), which was the final condition of Pompey. One should not forget, however, that Caesar easily bested the mutineers, and was able to survive even in the face of a titanic storm. The reader should keep this fact in mind as Caesar faces his greatest trial yet in the final lines of the epic.

Because they have framed Caesar as Pompeian, the plotters themselves act in a quasi-Caesarian manner: *tu parce morari* ("refrain from delaying," 10.395). However, Lucan, incredibly, has Pothinus frame their cause in terms of anti-Caesarian partisanship: *iugulus mihi Caesaris haustus / hoc praestare potest, Pompei caede nocentes / ut populus Romanus amet* ("draining Caesar's throat can present this to me, that the Roman people will love those guilty of Pompey's slaughter," 10.387-89). Surely he is stretching his love of paradox to breaking point here. However, such rhetoric shows the confusion of civil war after Pharsalus to the extent that the Egyptians, representing everything that is un-Roman in their decadence and confusion, now stake a claim on behalf of the Roman people. To bolster this confusion, they actually have a Roman army under their command: *pars maxima turbae / plebis erat Latiae* ("the greatest portion of the mob was

of the Latian people," 10.402-03). Even though the purely Roman nature of civil war was already corrupted as far back as Book 3 when Caesar attacked the Greek city of Massilia, after Pharsalus the splintered nature of the conflict draws in more and more barbarian forces.

In fact, none of the three protagonists can escape this spiraling away of civil war.[50] Pompey is the first to succumb to this phenomenon, when in Book 8 he considers enlisting the Parthians and dies while planning to enlist the Egyptians; Cato is the least affected, but the snakes that prove deadly to his men are native to Libya, and he is finally rescued by the Psylli, an indigenous African tribe. Caesar's is the most convoluted, since he is supporting Cleopatra against Ptolemy, whose backers possess a contingent of Roman troops. It is also no accident that all three main characters also find themselves on the edges of the Roman world in the last three books: as will be examined more fully in the next chapter, at the same time Caesar floods over the empire, civil war itself also floods, and with it both Caesar and his opponents are pushed out toward the margins of the world.

The Plot against Caesar: The Progress of the Plot

When Lucan returns to the action, he again describes Caesar in ominously Pompeian terms: *poteratque cruor per regia fundi / pocula Caesareus mensaeque incumbere cervix* ("and Caesar's blood could have been shed into the royal cups, and his neck rested on the table," 10.423-24). This obsessive focus on Caesar's head, or rather on his lack of it, shows that even the poet is jumping on the bandwagon initiated earlier

[50] Pogorzelski (2011) 154 intriguingly posits that after Pharsalus, the poem offers four distinct geographies, each based on one of the three protagonists (plus the narrator), thus challenging the centrality of Rome and limiting the narrator's wish for an endless empire in the early part of Book 1.

by Pothinus. When daylight breaks, the conspirators' army is positively Caesarian in contrast:

> *cum procul a muris acies non sparsa maniplis*
> *nec vaga conspicitur, sed iustos qualis ad hostes*
> *recta fronte venit: passuri comminus arma*
> *laturique ruunt.* (10.436-39)
>
> When troops are sighted far from the walls, neither wandering nor with scattered divisions, but such as comes upon proper enemies with straight vanguard: they rush forth, ready to suffer and inflict blows at close range.

Non sparsa is the key here: the army here is compressed and ready to unleash their aggression. But recall that this Caesarian behavior is only possible precisely because they are the *Latia plebs* which the narrator mentioned above. Even serving under foreign forces, civil war still manages to find Caesar: note Lucan's emphasis on the Roman quality of their fighting in *comminus*, which describes close quarter combat with the *gladius*.

All this causes Caesar to take cover within the court: *clausae se protegit aulae / degeneres passus latebras* ("he guarded himself in the locked court, enduring cowardly recesses," 10.440-41). This is the first time in the epic that he finds the need to hide. As will be examined more fully in Chapter 5, *latebra* and the act of hiding are peculiarly associated with the republicans and other enemies of Caesar (recall in Book 3 the senators emerging from their own *latebrae*); *degeneres* reinforces this physical weakness, recalling Laelius' disparagement of the republicans as *degenerem…togam*. However, we must remember that according to the formula, the act of hiding always potentially has the function of dormancy and thus regeneration. And so it goes: Caesar's self-restriction actually gives him the impetus to reorganize his own forces: *minima collegerat arma / parte domus* ("he had gathered weapons in the smallest part of the house," 10.442-43).

Nevertheless, Caesar knows that he is still in grave danger: *tangunt animos iraeque metusque* ("anger and fear affect his mind," 10.443).

To emphasize the formulaic undertones of his desperation, Lucan employs a pair of short similes:

> *sic fremit in parvis fera nobilis abdita claustris*
> *et frangit rabidos praemorso carcere dentes,*
> *nec secus in Siculis fureret tua flamma cavernis,*
> *obstrueret summam si quis tibi, Mulciber, Aetnam.* (10.445-48)
>
> In this way a noble beast roars, hidden in a tiny cage, and breaks his furious teeth in chewing his prison, and no differently would your fire, Vulcan, rage in Sicilian caverns, if someone obstructed Aetna's peak.

The second simile is more straightforward: it reminds the reader of the dynamics of the formula—namely that Caesarian rage only manifests itself upon the imposition of an obstacle, and thus that it is fundamentally a reactive force. The first is more ominous, however: Lucan harks back to the Book 1 Libyan lion in comparing Caesar to this unnamed predator. There are two important differences, however. The first is that the Libyan lion actually endangered its very existence in leaping at the hunters; while this beast also harms itself (*frangit…dentes*), it suffers only minor damage. Yet at least the Libyan lion was able to break through the "obstacle" of the spear in leaping at its foes, while this animal remains stuck in its cage, just as Caesar is hemmed inside the palace. Moreover, *dentes* is a pointed choice of words by Lucan, since teeth are, of course, a predator's most lethal weapons. If the act of formulaic regeneration actually breaks these tools, then something has gone terribly wrong with the formula. A Caesarian buildup that not only does not result in breaking a barrier, but also causes actual damage to the Caesarian "spear-point" itself suggests a fundamental dysfunction. Caesar as a caged beast is starting to look like Curio, who was also similarly trapped in his last stand.

Caesar's descent into helplessness continues. In order to show just how abjectly afraid he is, Lucan contrasts his fearlessness at Pharsalus (10.449-52) with his current condition: *expavit servile nefas* ("he feared the slaves' crimes," 10.453). He humiliates Caesar still further by describing him as a *puer imbellis vel captis femina muris* ("an unwarlike child or a woman in a captured city," 10.458); in effect, Caesar has become no better than either the boy-king he is taking hostage or Ptolemy's sister, his lover. Nowhere is it clearer that prolonged contact with both these heirs to the Egyptian throne has brought him down to their level. Thus, it is no surprise that Lucan deploys a simile comparing Caesar to Medea (10.464-67).[51] Caesar is now far beyond the normal dormancy of the formula; he is fast approaching a linear, irrevocable degeneration. This explains why, even though he is trapped in a small space, he lacks the ability to regenerate, but continues to be distracted and diffuse: *incerto lustrat vagus atria cursu* ("he ranges about the chambers, wandering on an unsure path," 10.460).[52]

There is a temporary lull as the parties try diplomacy. However, this soon ends through treachery (the Egyptians kill Ptolemy's messenger) and the fighting continues with increased intensity. However, the "Egyptian" army fails in its purpose as well: *sed caeca iuventus / consilii vastos ambit divisa penates, / et nusquam totis incursat viribus agmen* ("but the youth, divided and without a plan, surround the vast building, and nowhere do the troops attack with all their strength," 10.482-84). In trying to assault the entire palace at once, they end up dissipating their strength. Unexpectedly, the palace actually provides an advantage for Caesar in forcing his enemies to stretch out their

[51] Ahl (1976) 226 cleverly observes that Caesar is even worse off than Medea by comparison, since he threatens to kill Cleopatra's brother, not his own.

[52] In his confusion, Caesar is reminiscent of Pompey right after his defeat at Pharsalus (8.4-5), another sign that he is getting dangerously close to the condition of his opponent.

forces to the point of overall weakness. As we will see in Chapter 5, this is similar to Pompey's strategy at Dyrrhachium: in order to counter Caesar's field fortifications, he constantly shifted his campsite so as to stretch Caesar's forces to their limit.

As if on cue, the failure of Caesar's enemies signals his return to form: *sed adest defensor ubique / Caesar* ("but Caesar is everywhere present as defender," 10.488-89). Such omnipresence alludes to his virtuoso performance at Pharsalus (7.557ff), in which he also seemingly directed every action of his army on the battlefield. Furthermore, the presence of enemies recharges Caesar: merely by being a defender, his is able to recharge his energy. This reminder of his greatest triumph in the epic seems to indicate that the formula is finally working for Caesar after his recent abasement. But before one thinks that he has finally settled on being Caesarian again, Lucan elucidates the paradox of his situation: *obsessusque gerit / expugnantis opus* ("and besieged, he performs the work of a besieger," 10.490-91). As Caesar faces crisis upon crisis, the formulaic cycle begins to rotate faster and faster as the phases crowd upon each other. He is now in exactly the same position that Pompey was at Dyrrhachium. In addition, Caesar faces the same paradox as his former son-in-law did, which is doing the work of offense while being in a defensive position. Lucan thus prepares the reader for Caesar's sudden reminiscence of Pompey in the last lines of the poem. In addition, the sudden rejuvenation of Caesar may stem from the Egyptian failure above. They are having their own mini civil war by fragmenting into uncooperative pieces; they too, like all other adversaries of Caesar before them, cannot sustain a truly Caesarian dynamic. As the besiegers falter, they

begin to take on the role of the besieged (as Caesar's army did at Dyrrhachium) and thus just what is needed for Caesar to regenerate and take the initiative.[53]

That the return of Caesar's vigor is accompanied by no less a representative element than flame is a sure sign that the formula is now working properly: *piceo iubet unguine tinctas / lampadas immitti iunctis in bella carinis* ("he orders torches dipped in oily pitch to be launched onto the linked warships," 10.491-92). Lucan makes this suggestion explicit by comparing the spreading flame to heavenly fire:

> *...percussaque flamma*
> *turbine non alio motu per tecta cucurrit*
> *quam solet aetherio lampas decurrere sulco*
> *materiaque carens atque ardens aere solo*. (10.500-03)
>
> …and the fire, struck by raging wind, raced through the rooftops with the same motion as when a fireball often streaks with heavenly trail, lacking matter and burning with air alone.

The *lampas*, which is to be rendered as some kind of meteor or comet, is reminiscent of the Caesarian thunderbolt as it hurtles toward earth, as well as the omen of the *lampas* at 1.532-33. However, *materiaque carens* marks an unsettling difference: the fire here does not have the fuel to sustain a lengthy burning, which suggests that Caesar's resurgence will not last long.

Yet Caesar is now in full battle mode, not even stopping to rest at night: *nec tempora cladis / perdidit in somnos* ("nor does he waste disaster's time in sleep," 10.505-06); he has fully recharged, and there is no time for dormancy. Taking the initiative, he seizes the island of Pharos: *insula quondam / in medio stetit illa mari sub tempore vatis / Proteos* ("once that island stood in mid-sea in the time of the seer Proteus," 10.509-11).

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[53] In addition, it is no accident that Caesar's resurgence comes after talks fail; his heart is now fully into violent resistance. As an added bonus, the Egyptians commit the *scelus*, so Caesar is actually in the right against them.

Lucan's mention of Proteus is especially apt here, considering the rapid shifts in Caesar's fortunes in this last section of the poem, more numerous than at any other point in the text.[54] Lucan's breathless sequence of events is testimony to this: first Pothinus and then Achillas are dispatched—a stunning victory for Caesar—yet the slave Ganymedes quickly takes command and continues fighting (10.530-33). On the one hand, Caesar seems to have achieved a swift "decapitation" of the Egyptian forces, but no surrender is forthcoming, and the final section will find him struggling for his life alone on a barren rock in the sea. Can the formula succeed a final time?

Caesar on the Mole: The Final Lines of the Epic

Thus ends Caesar's adventure in Alexandria:

> *Molis in exiguae spatio stipantibus armis*
> *dum parat in vacuas Martem transferre carinas,*
> *dux Latius tota subitus formidine belli*
> *cingitur: hinc densae praetexunt litora classes,*
> *hinc tergo insultant pedites. via nulla salutis,*
> *non fuga, non virtus; vix spes quoque mortis honestae.*
> *non acie fusa nec magnae stragis acervis*
> *vincendus tum Caesar erat sed sanguine nullo.*
> *captus sorte loci pendet; dubiusque timeret*
> *optaretne mori respexit in agmine denso*
> *Scaevam perpetuae meritum iam nomine famae*
> *ad campos, Epidamne, tuos, ubi solus apertis*
> *obsedit muris calcantem moenia Magnum.* (10.534-46)
>
> As the troops were packed on the pier's tiny space while he prepares to shift the battle onto empty ships, the Latian general is suddenly surrounded by complete fear of the war: on this side the copious fleet borders the shore, while on the other the infantry taunt his rear. There is no path to safety, no escape, no room for bravery; hardly even hope for honorable death. At that moment Caesar was about to be defeated not with a routed army nor huge heaps of slaughter, but with no bloodshed.

[54] For Proteus the shape-shifting king of Egypt, see Hom. *Od.* 4.430ff, Herodotus 2.112-120, and Euripides' *Helen*.

> He hesitates, caught by the chance of his position; and doubtful whether he should fear or hope to die, in the dense throng he looked back at Scaeva, who had already achieved the title of eternal glory on your fields, Epidamnus, when he alone, after the walls had been breached, besieged Pompey as he was trampling the walls.

Caesar now finds himself stranded on Pharos in his most straitened circumstances yet (*molis in exiguae spatio*).[55] The formula faces its greatest test here: this cramped space should induce a collection of energy, especially with his men packed around him (*stipantibus armis*), but a sudden burst of fear arrests him as he surveys both the Egyptian army and navy bearing down upon him.[56] As we have seen, sudden hesitation is rare enough for Caesar that it becomes structurally significant: the instance before his crossing of the Rubicon, which begins the civil war, foreshadows that before the battle of Pharsalus. Each time, however, fear preceded breakthrough; in the formulaic sense, breakthrough presupposes the presence of an obstacle and the mustering up of courage and *furor* to overcome it. But here it is much more serious: *tota…formidine* as opposed to just *formidine* in Book 7. Furthermore, Lucan stresses that there is no way out. There is neither opportunity for Pompeian *fuga* nor Caesarian *virtus*, the two great opposing forces that drive the epic. In fact, *sanguine nullo* even suggests that Caesar may not even

[55] Berti (2000) 342 notes that the final scene is a repetition of the palace siege; this time, however, the situation is much more dire. Rossi (2005) 254-55 sees a parallel to the beginning of the *Aeneid* in Caesar's plan to continue the war at sea—an interesting thought, especially in its ramifications for the endless repetition of war, but perhaps too strained. A better parallel might be found within the poem itself: Pompey's voyage from Brundisium at the end of Book 2, which initiates the spreading of civil war.

[56] Berti (2000) 294-95 observes that throughout the poem Caesar is especially adept at besieging others, while he is at his weakest when he is fighting off a siege; however, he weakens his own argument by adducing 10.490-91 to show that Caesar adapts to the role of besieger even when besieged. In fact, such flexibility is the essence of formulaic behavior. Masters (1992) 254 remarks that compared to the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, Caesar's fear and indecision are Lucan's own contribution.

die in battle at all.[57] Caesar thus finds himself in stasis; much like Curio, he is surrounded, yet without the ability to muster up formulaic energy; instead he faces the possibility of a complete formulaic failure.[58]

The action stops here; what is left of the epic is reminiscence. Most scholars do not accept that Lucan actually planned to conclude the epic at 10.546; Masters, building on Haffter's article, offers an interesting rebuttal.[59] It is not my intention to dispute this issue at length here, but I will say that I agree with the vast majority of scholarly opinion that the poem as we have it is incomplete. However, I believe pragmatism is also necessary: since the poem as we have it all that we will ever have, it is useless to speculate on how many more books he may have written, and thus we should treat these lines as if they are the actual ending. Thus, I feel that these lines deserve a close analysis both in view of their factual importance as the effective conclusion to Lucan's epic as well as the fact that they provide the final glimpse of the formula. Now the appearance or reminiscence of Scaeva with which these final lines begin has already been prepared by the description of Caesar as "besieged besieger" at 10.490-91.[60] But the roles are

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[57] Berti (2000) 345 says that this phrase may allude to death by drowning if Caesar decided to swim for safety (which he did: see Plut. *Caes.* 49 and App. *BC* 2.150). If so, then Caesar's great adversary, water (as seen in the next chapter), would finally win.

[58] In fact, Caesar in his pre-battle speech at Pharsalus describes the situation at Dyrrhachium in language that recalls Curio's last stand: *Pompeius in arto / agmina vestra loco vetita virtute moveri / cum tenuit, quanto satiavit sanguine ferrum!* ("when Pompey held your ranks in a narrow space, preventing your valor from free movement, with how much blood were his swords quenched!" 7.315-17). Curio's men were similarly squeezed into such a state that they could not move their weapons for fear of injuring each other (4.778-83). I believe it is not insignificant to keep in mind this linguistic "contamination" of the narrow escape in Book 6 by the disaster at the end of Book 4, since it diminishes the optimism of the dual *exempla* of Scaeva and Pompey that loom over the final lines of the epic.

[59] Masters (1992) 235 n.34 provides a list of various proposed endings. Haffter (1957), Brisset (1964) 164 n.2 and Masters (1992) 216-59 are the main proponents that the epic is complete as it is.

[60] Whether Caesar actually sees Scaeva or simply recalls him is an issue of minor contention: Holmes (1989) 316-17 is in favor of the literal sense, while Haskins (1887) 386 is agnostic and Masters (1992) 256 argues for reminiscence. Masters (1992) 256 also notes perceptively that the figurative sense of *respexit* is

reversed now: the Egyptians are now playing the role of Scaeva, and so Caesar is looking to the "wrong" *exemplum*.[61]

To be sure, based on Scaeva's narrow escape at the end of his *aristeia*, Caesar would also be keen on a similar *deus ex machina* outcome for himself. Yet fundamentally, Caesar should be looking toward Pompey's example here.[62] After all, it was Pompey who was trying to break free from Caesar's circumvallation at Dyrrhachium, and who was thus in the same role militarily as Caesar. Pompey's sudden presence, however, is also not without subtle forewarning. In fact, during the last fifty lines of Book 10, his shade suddenly looms in the background. Notably, Lucan views the murder of Achillas in terms favorable to Pompey: *altera, Magne, tuis iam victima mittitur umbris* ("Magnus, another victim is now sent to your shade," 10.524). By killing his enemies, Caesar is actually benefiting Pompey's shade, and perhaps even hastening his own demise, as the final sacrifice to the *umbra* will of course be Caesar himself (10.528-29). Moreover, Pompey's *umbra* has actually been a silent presence in Book 10 all along: as soon as Caesar steps ashore in Egypt, Lucan proclaims that it actually helps save Caesar's life (*tua profuit umbra, / Magne, tui socerum rapuere a sanguine manes, / ne populus post te Nilum Romanus amaret*, "your shade, Magnus, was useful, your ghost snatched your father-in-law from slaughter, so the Roman people might not love the Nile after you," 10.6-8). In view of Pompey's "appearance" here, the opening lines of Book 10 seem almost to foreshadow Caesar's final predicament.

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uncharacteristic of Caesar and in fact brings him close to Pompey, as if to prepare the reader for the surprise that Caesar should actually learn from his arch-rival.

[61] Berti (2000) 39-41, in discussing the role of Scaeva at the end of Book 10, misses this key point.

[62] Masters' (1992) 257-58 argument that Scaeva and Pompey draw attention away from Caesar is only superficially true, since the former is merely a small-scale Caesar and the latter behaves in a Caesarian manner in the Dyrrhachium episode.

No wonder Caesar is confused: the *exemplum* he recalls turns on itself. Lucan surprises the reader right to the very end: in order to escape, Caesar must look to his chief enemy—not only in civil war, but also in patterns of behavior. Yet Scaeva is also not the same here: even though *obsedit* is aggressive, it is also static. Lucan thus reduces his *aristeia* to a mere wall, heightening the inherently self-contradictory role he played in Book 6. Scaeva effectively replaces the breached walls (*apertis…muris*) with his own body. Yet at the same time Pompey is *calcantem moenia*: are these the same walls as *muris*? The terseness here is such that both Scaeva and Pompey can be interpreted as breaching their own walls at the same time as the other's, or even that Scaeva is the *moenia* upon which Pompey is stomping. In other words, Caesar has finally met his equal in force, a condition symbolized by the mutual besieging of Scaeva and Pompey. Not once did the formulaic similes ever show any problem for Caesar: no *materia* could block the lightning bolt, and the lion simply passed through the incoming spear. Yet in Caesar's final reminiscence, equal and opposing forces crash into each other, creating a point of singularity.[63] At this point, the energies of the poem remain forever frozen.[64] Looking back over Book 10, it seems that Caesar's contact with Alexandria has enervated him to the extent that the formula is no longer strong enough to grant him victory one more time. Caesar has found his *par* at last; this term, which is undermined the moment it appears in the text due to the grossly unequal status of Pompey and Caesar, now at last comes into its full meaning.

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[63] Henderson (1987) 152 unpacks with typical flamboyance the confusion of *moenia* and *muris* in the last two lines. In fact, the closing summary of the Dyrrhachium episode is the very crystallization of civil war, since civil war is, as Bartsch (1997) 59 puts it, stasis, with both sides locked in paralysis.

[64] Masters (1992) 253 suggestively states that the only way to end an epic about the endlessness of civil war is to cut it off arbitrarily.

Yet we know that Caesar escaped yet another life-endangering situation and that he lived to fight another day. In this sense, Caesar's reminiscence of Scaeva is structurally significant because Book 6 was the point at which Caesar's energy made a new beginning after the serious dangers of Book 5. Perhaps Book 10 would have been a similar turning point if Lucan had lived to continue the epic. Instead of taking inspiration from Scaeva, however, Caesar may have arisen anew with Pompey's Book 6 aggression in mind.

In view of the prominence of Pompey's shade in determining this outcome, both at the beginning and the end of Book 10, it remains to be seen how Pompey became so powerful *after* his death, especially when Lucan shows him as so compromised in life—this will be the subject of Chapter 5. Having charted the large-scale arc of Caesar's formula, the next chapter will begin the process of examining opposition to Caesar, such as it is. We begin not with Pompey or Cato, but with an element of nature that ends up most successfully resisting Caesar; and which ends up being a model for the two human figures in this regard: water.

Chapter 4. Aquatic Resistance to Caesar

Lucan's poem is steeped in bodies of water. This comes naturally as a result of his preoccupation with geography and natural phenomena. Particularly important are rivers: Lucan mentions rivers 90 times in the *Bellum Civile* as opposed to 65 occurrences in the Vergilian corpus and 60 in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[1] However, the role of rivers in Lucan has not elicited much investigation.[2] The present discussion is based on the observation that rivers (and other bodies of water) in the poem serve as opposing forces to Caesar's relentless progress.[3] However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Caesar himself borrows the overflow and flooding model from his aquatic enemies. Thus, any successful resistance by water itself carries with it the risk of chaotic destruction. Especially in the cases of the Book 4 flood and Book 5 storm, such a mighty force threatens to send the world into the same kind of chaos that Caesar unleashes through civil war.[4] In other words, Caesar's breakthrough and flooding enable him to destroy the political fabric of the republic, while the deluges cause physical obliteration. The fundamental paradox of aquatic resistance is thus that it ends up creating a condition just as bad as or even worse than what it seeks to prevent. Such is the logic of civil war: even a win against Caesar is a loss, and a catastrophic one at that.

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[1] The figures are from Walde (2007) 43.

[2] Walde (2007) is a much-needed introduction to the issue; the only previous study, Mendell (1942), does little more than catalogue them. See also Sanford (1934) and now Tracy (2009) 255-61. For rivers in Latin literature generally, see Jones (2005).

[3] A view first proposed by Schönberger (1960) 82.

[4] Lucan may have drawn on the concept of Stoic κατακλυσμός, which is the aquatic counterpart to ἐκπύρωσις. Indeed, his uncle Seneca provided a model close at hand at *NQ* 3.27-30. For a detailed analysis of Lucan's storms, see Morford (1996) 20-58.

Accordingly, as the epic progresses and Caesar's domination becomes ever more secure, there is a movement from literal overflowing to a figurative or metaphorical overflowing. As Caesar increasingly "floods" across more of the physical world, the only space left for freedom and resistance is in the realm of words and *umbrae*. The climax of this kind of "sublimated" overflow is the Nile episode, which does not face Caesar with its actual waters, but only through Acoreus' rhetoric. Yet because Caesar happens to be at his weakest level in the epic, having defeated Pompey and separated from his men, Acoreus and the Nile actually succeed in resisting Caesar, even though there is no acknowledgment of defeat from Caesar, merely a lack of reply (though his very silence may be taken as a sign of loss).[5]

1. Rivers as a Model of Resistance

Caesar at the Rubicon: Redux

In the previous chapter, the crossing of the Rubicon was examined from the angle of Caesar's hesitation and its significance as the first manifestation of his formulaic breakthrough in the narrative proper. Now, however, attention will be turned to the stream itself. First of all, it must be noted that from his first appearance in the epic, Caesar is linked to a river, the crossing of which signals a breaking of both literal boundaries (due to its status as the border between Cisalpine Gaul and Italy proper) and of course political and legal boundaries, as Caesar's crossing brings about civil war.[6]

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[5] *Pace* Walde (2007) 33 and 34 n.49, who sees Caesar as triumphing over nature in the end.

[6] Walde (2007) 30 notes that this establishes Caesar from the outset as a "dominatore della natura," as well as the fact that he, "diversamente dalle altre figure, deve spesso combattere contro grandi masse d'acqua."

However, instead of organizing the episode as a straightforward description of the Rubicon and Caesar's crossing of it, Lucan gives us a rather puzzling structure. He divides the entire Rubicon passage (1.183-222) into two narrative sections, in the middle of which lies the important lion simile (1.205-212): the first section focuses on the appearance of the personification of Rome and her exchange with Caesar, while only in the second narrative section (1.213-222) does Lucan elaborate on the Rubicon itself. On the one hand, this structure makes sense because Caesar's hesitation is certainly not due to the paltry nature of the Rubicon, which hardly seems to be a boundary worth considering (Lucan describes it as *parvi Rubiconis*, 1.185). Instead, Caesar's hesitation is due to the appearance of the *imago patriae*. Yet on the other hand, if the Rubicon is so insignificant, why does Lucan bother to devote ten lines to it, especially after Caesar has crossed over?

The Rubicon, however, is not completely inert:

> *inde moras solvit belli tumidumque per amnem*
> *signa tulit propere…* (1.204-05)
>
> Thus he releases the restraints of war and hastily carried his standards through the swelling river…

Note *tumidum*: even while Caesar and his army are crossing the Rubicon with ease, the river is not content merely to be passively trampled over. The river, in other words, is not merely content to be static, but has grown in size from *parvus*.[7] It is as if the Rubicon is trying to match Caesar's aggression with its own; such an act of resistance, however fruitless in this situation, is a reminder, however slight, that nature is not content to

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She also adds (2007, 31) that generally speaking, rivers represent natural borders, and that their crossing or conquest occurs "con un'azione che a volte risulta sacrilege."

[7] As Roche (2009) 215 observes.

remain passive while it is trampled over by Caesar. In fact, the Rubicon's slight swelling is a harbinger of the elemental forces that rivers and other bodies of water will bring to bear upon Caesar in the course of the poem. In the context of the organization of this passage, in which the figure of Roma appears between these two instances of the Rubicon, one could even suggest that the presence of the *imago patriae* contributes to the river's swelling. Viewed in this way, Roma, Caesar's own hesitation, and the Rubicon are all linked together in a network of *mora*. The dynamic nature of the Rubicon's would-be deterrent value needs to be emphasized, however: far from merely serving as static boundaries for Caesar to break, the fluid nature of rivers renders them capable of expansion, even potentially overstepping its very own boundaries in order to stop Caesar. Rivers are thus Caesar's true *par*, the only anti-Caesarian entities in the poem whose behavior matches the dynamics of the Caesarian formula. If there is any hope of defeating Caesar, it lies with them.

It is in this aspect that the significance of the second narrative section lies:

> *Fonte cadit modico parvisque impellitur undis*
> *puniceus Rubicon, cum fervida canduit aestas,*
> *perque imas serpit vallis et Gallica certus*
> *limes ab Ausoniis disterminat arva colonis.*
> *tum vires praebebat hiemps atque auxerat undas*
> *tertia iam gravido pluvialis Cynthia cornu*
> *et madidis Euri resolutae flatibus Alpes.*
> *primus in obliquum sonipes opponitur amnem*
> *excepturus aquas; molli tum cetera rumpit*
> *turba vado facilis iam fracti fluminis undas.* (1.213-22)
>
> The reddish Rubicon falls from a modest spring and is driven with scanty water when the sweltering summer shines, and it creeps through the valley's depths and separates Gallic fields from Italian farmers as a clear boundary. The winter was then imparting its strength and its waters had been augmented by the third moon with its heavy horn, and the Alps were dissolved by the damp breezes of Eurus. The horses are first arrayed

> aslant the stream, intending to receive its waters; then the rest of the throng breaks with gentle ford the pliant waters of the now shattered river.

Only after Caesar's crossing does Lucan actually give an account of the Rubicon, notably (in connection with *tumidum* above) emphasizing its swollen condition in the winter. He does this before describing Caesar's crossing again in what is apparently a "rewinding" of the narrative.[8] This varied repetition also has the effect of taking the *imago patriae* out of the picture and thus framing the opposition to Caesar in purely naturalistic terms. In other words, the Rubicon's swelling is not incumbent on the intervention of Roma, as might be inferred from its change from *parvus* at 1.184 to *tumidus* at 1.204. Instead, the river has been swollen all along due to the additional snow and rain from the winter season.[9] In effect, Lucan is providing the reader in this section with an alternate "focalization" of the Rubicon incident, as if teasingly to offer a mythological account before banishing it (and other supernatural presences) from the poem. The purpose of the repetition can almost be said to be programmatic in this sense: his poem emphasizes scientific realities instead of divine intervention. If Lucan's Caesar is a force of nature, his opponents are as well.

For now, Caesar is victorious. Lucan describes his technique of breaking a river's force exactly as Caesar himself does in his commentaries.[10] Rosner-Siegel well observes that *obliquum* alludes to the *obliqua…flamma* of the lightning simile at 1.154;[11] Lucan thus shows that Caesar symbolically blocks the Rubicon with his own force. Yet, of

[8] Masters (1992) 1-3 deserves credit for being the first to recognize the significance of this unusual feature and to use it to launch his discussion of the pervasive narrative *mora* in the poem against constant Caesarian aggression.

[9] Roche (2009) 218 notes keenly that *parvisque impelllitur undis* "corrects" *parvi* at 1.185.

[10] As shown by Getty (1940) 57 and Roche (2009) 219.

[11] Rosner-Siegel (1983) 169.

course, the role of the cavalry here is to act as a barrier: *excepturus* means to sustain or withstand the river's force.[12] This is uncharacteristically passive for Caesar, but this action will have implications in his Nile encounter, for there Caesar will also try to "contain" the verbal flow of Acoreus within his mind.

Caesar and the River at Corfinium

The next river that Caesar encounters is at the town of Corfinium, which he tries to besiege in Book 2 while pursuing Pompey down the Italian peninsula. Corfinium is the only Italian town that puts up an actual fight due to its commander Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus.[13] Now the importance of this river (called the Aternus, though unnamed as such by Lucan) in this poem is made evident by the number of lines Lucan devotes to it: the entire episode consists of Domitius' defense of the bridgehead (2.478-504) and his surrender to Caesar (2.505-525). The seven intervening days of negotiation do not register in Lucan's narrative at all. Already, at the beginning of the scene, Lucan emphasizes the opposition between Caesar and water by underscoring Caesar's connection to the element of fire:[14]

> *ut procul immensam campo consurgere nubem*
> *ardentisque acies percussis sole corusco*
> *conspexit telis…* (2.481-83)
>
> As he saw a huge cloud rising on the field from afar and the army blazing as its weapons were struck by the gleaming sun…

[12] Roche (2009) 218.

[13] It is generally assumed that Domitius' decision to stay was a mistake: see von Fritz (1942) and Fantham (1992a) 231-33. For a defense of Domitius' actions see Burns (1966).

[14] Schönberger (1960) 82.

Caesar's men are literally reflecting the sun's rays toward the eyes of Domitius; recall that the Caesarian lightning bolt itself blinds men's eyes (*praestringens lumina*, 1.154). Caesar's connection with the sun here is strengthened because only seventy lines before, Lucan relates the myth of Phaethon and his defeat by the river Po (as discussed below). In defense, Domitius decides to unleash the full force of the river:

> *…"socii, decurrite" dixit*
> *"fluminis ad ripas undaeque immergite pontem.*
> *et tu montanis totus nunc fontibus exi*
> *atque omnis trahe, gurges, aquas, ut spumeus alnos*
> *discussa compage feras. hoc limite bellum*
> *haereat, hac hostis lentus terat otia ripa.*
> *praecipitem cohibete ducem: victoria nobis*
> *hic primum stans Caesar erit."* (2.483-90)
>
> …he said, "Comrades, run down to the banks of the river and plunge the bridge into the water. And you, river, come forth from the mountain springs in full strength and convey all your waters, so that you may carry off the planks in your foam, their framework shattered. Let war stop at this boundary, let the enemy sluggishly spend their leisure on this bank. Constrain the headlong leader: for us, victory will be Caesar stopping here for the first time."

Domitius tries to create a full-blown flood instead of mere swelling as in the case of the Rubicon.[15] *Discussa compage* indicates a complete bursting of the boundaries; Domitius is thus forcing an escalation of aquatic resistance. In addition, *compages* is an important programmatic word in Lucan, signifying the literal fabric of the universe giving way under the strain of civil war.[16] It first appears in the very first simile of the epic, when the poet compares civil war to ἐκπύρωσις: *sic, cum compage soluta / saecula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora* ("thus, when the structure has dissolved and the last hour gathers

[15] Fantham (1992a) 171 remarks that the Corfinium episode recalls Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon.

[16] Lapidge (1979) 363-64, who also points out that *gurges* hints at chaos.

so many ages of the universe," 1.72-73).[17] We thus see the potential danger of releasing such a powerful natural force: first, that in order to fight Caesar effectively, one cannot help but resort to a Caesarian mode of action.[18] However, this risks plunging the world in yet more chaos, thus bringing closer the very situation he tries to prevent.

Yet Domitius does not seem to realize this dilemma, as evident in his use of *limite* and thus portraying the river in static terms, even though destroying the bridge is erasing any sense of a boundary at all. One might see here a case of self-deception and hypocrisy because he frames his action in the language of law and order while ignoring his own contribution to anarchy. Indeed, he proclaims *praecipitem cohibete ducem* while utilizing a power which can potentially be just as *praeceps*. With this episode, we begin to see the full connection between the Pompeians and water (to be elaborated in the next chapter).

For all this bluster, however, Caesar knows that his opponent is merely bluffing:

> *non si tumido me gurgite Ganges*
> *summoveat, stabit iam flumine Caesar in ullo*
> *post Rubiconis aquas. equitum properate catervae,*
> *ite simul pedites, ruiturum ascendite pontem*. (2.496-99)
>
> Not if the Ganges should remove me with its swelling flood, will Caesar stop at any river after the Rubicon's waters. Make haste, squadrons of cavalry; go with them, infantry; climb this bridge that will fall.

Caesar's reference to the Ganges is echoed in the catalogue of Pompey's forces in Book 3, where Lucan mentions that it is the only river that was able to halt Alexander the Great's relentless march eastward. In this context, Caesar is thus making the grandiose

[17] For other similes describing the civil war, cf. the Book 1 simile comparing the panic at Rome to a shipwreck (1.502) and the storm in Book 5 (5.633).

[18] For the importance of the river to Domitius, Fantham (1992a) 172 notes that he addresses the river at greater length than he does his own men.

claim that he will surpass his predecessor while at the same time acknowledging the importance of rivers as his personal adversaries. In fact, this river is his only adversary: as Caesar says earlier, *non satis est muris latebras quaesisse pavori?* ("is it not enough to seek hiding places for your fear within the walls?" 2.494). Caesar thus accuses Domitius of fleeing the field and leaving all defense to this non-human opponent. Indeed, as we will see in Chapter 4, *lateo* and its related words are one of the characteristics of Caesar's victims. Thus, *latebras* associates Domitius with the other republican opponents of Caesar, who have been useless up to this point: at 2.462-77 Lucan lists the Italian cities that fall quickly to Caesar. The only difference here is that Domitius has the power of water behind him, and thus is able to put up temporary resistance.

Yet just as at the Rubicon, Lucan springs a narrative trick on the reader, as is shown by *nam prior e campis ut conspicit amne soluto / rumpi Caesar iter* ("for as Caesar from the field first sees his path being severed if the river were set free," 2.492-93). Caesar has actually anticipated Domitius' order to destroy the bridge and thus intercepts his troops before they finish their task.[19] Hence, there is no confrontation with the river at all and Caesar is granted an easy victory: *ingreditur pulsa fluvium statione vacantem / Caesar* ("Caesar steps into the empty river after the guard has been driven off," 2.503-04). Instead of acting as an aggressive force, the river is reduced to being a helpless object for Caesar's conquest. The sense of *vacantem* here is not just that the river is available for Caesar to conquer, but also that it is empty of substance, such that Caesar can then "fill" it with himself, as he will do at Rome in Book 3. The failure of Domitius' men to unleash the river's force in time causes it to remain passive, and essentially to assume a republican sense of emptiness (as Rome will be a vessel for

[19] As Fantham (1992a) 173 explains.

Caesar). There has been some progress since the Rubicon, but Caesar has yet to truly face the power of water.

Phaethon and the Po

It is no accident that this river plays, or rather would have played, such a major role in the confrontation between Caesar and Domitius, for just seventy lines prior to the episode Lucan inserts a symbolic confrontation between a river and a Caesarian force. Pompey and followers have settled at Capua after fleeing Rome, and Lucan takes the opportunity here to embark on an extended description of the Appennines (2.392-438). While surveying the various rivers that draw their source from this mountain chain, Lucan mentions the Eridanus (now known as the Po), which leads to another digression on the myth of Phaethon. The importance of the Eridanus can be seen as follows.[20] First, Lucan distinguishes it from other rivers by remarking on its volume of water:

> *...quoque magis nullum tellus se solvit in amnem*
> *Eridanus fractas devolvit in aequora silvas*
> *Hesperiamque exhaurit aquis*. (2.408-10)
>
> …and the Eridanus, into which the earth is dissolved more than any other river, rolls broken forests into the sea and drains Hesperia of water.

This leads directly into the inset Phaethon myth, since only a river of the Po's size could absorb and quench the fire of the sun at a time when other rivers were helpless or dried up. Next, within the mythological inset, Lucan fulfills expectations by stating that, with all other rivers having vanished from the solar heat, the Eridanus was the only river left that could resist its power: *gurgitibus raptis penitus tellure perusta, / hunc habuisse pares*

[20] As Fantham (1992a) 159 notes, the Eridanus section occupies the central portion of the entire excursus—a sign of its importance.

Phoebeis ignibus undas ("that since the rivers were carried off deeply from the parched earth, this possessed water that was equal to Phoebus' fire," 2.414-15).

If we compare Lucan's brief summary of the myth to Ovid's famous extended version at the beginning of *Metamorphoses* Book 2, we can clearly see Lucan's emphasis on the Eridanus as the primary opponent of Phaethon. First of all, the Eridanus is almost completely absent from Ovid's account, appearing only at *Met.* 2.324 in order to quench Phaethon's burning body (*excipit Eridanus flagrantiaque abluit ora*, "the Eridanus receives and bathes his burning face"), thus adding more of a sense of quiet closure than of being his main adversary. Second is the absence of Jupiter; he appears in all other versions of the myth as the real savior of the earth because he hurls a lightning bolt at the sun-chariot (*Met*. 2.304-18).[21] Besides Lucan's decision to remove the Olympian deities from his epic, the presence of Jupiter would also have resulted in a falling fiery entity being annihilated by another of the same element (indeed, precisely the Caesarian thunderbolt).[22] Instead, Lucan needs the Eridanus to play the major role of stopping Phaethon in order to reinforce the symbolic fire-water opposition.

How does the myth relate to the main narrative? Phaethon is clearly a Caesarian figure through the presence of the thunderbolt simile in Book 1: both fall from the heavens to a fiery death.[23] The obvious difference, of course, is that the Caesarian lightning bolt regenerates itself, thus completing its cycle. In Phaethon's case, the

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[21] For other versions of the Phaethon myth, see Ap. Rhod. *Argonautica* 4.591-611 and Eratosthenes' *Katasterismoi* 18.

[22] Ovid somewhat humorously describes Jupiter not being able to create rainclouds at this exact moment (2.309-310) and emphasizes his solution as fighting fire with fire (*saevis compescuit ignibus ignes*, "he constrains fire with savage fire," 2.313).

[23] König (1970) 447 and Tracey (2009) 353 make the connection between the Phaethon myth and Caesar's opposition to rivers.

Eridanus is a real *par*, in contrast to the mismatch between Caesar and Pompey; as Lucan himself states, *nec coiere pares* ("nor did they confront each other as equals," 1.129). However, the fact that a Caesarian figure does perish here is no weak indication that Lucan holds out some possibility for a permanent end to Caesar, especially if one recalls the end of the lion simile. Still, Caesar's absolute destruction can only occur in a simile, and therefore on a mythical plane. Just as the bolt simile shows the reader the "ideal" scenario of Caesar's perpetual reincarnation, so the lion simile and the Phaethon myth hold out the possibility of his death. As will be seen in Chapter 4, the purpose of simile as a vehicle for wishful thinking also holds true for Pompey; furthermore, not until the Nile will any body of water be able to halt Caesar, though Lucan does offer a subtle foreshadowing when he asserts that the Eridanus beats the Nile in water volume by discounting the latter's stagnant waters near its mouth (*non minor hic Nilo, si non per plana iacentis / Aegypti Libycas Nilus stagnaret harenas*, "this would not be less than the Nile, if the Nile did not flood Libyan sands through the plains of low-lying Egypt," 2.416-17). Though Lucan seemingly wants to elevate the Italian river above barbarian rivers (the Ister as well here), this hint also suggests that the Nile has an even greater flexibility in water volume than the Eridanus, which will be the secret of its success against Caesar.

As a side note, the Phaethon myth also clarifies the association between Caesar and the sun that was implicit in the Domitius section. There have been hints of this ever since the Rubicon episode, when, at Caesar's crossing, the stars flee as the sun arises: *et ignes / solis Lucifero fugiebant astra relicto* ("and the stars fled the fires of the sun, though Lucifer remained," 1.231-32). Finally, there is Lucan's apostrophe to Nero: the

poet urges the emperor to *flammigeros Phoebi conscendere currus* ("mount the fiery chariot of Phoebus," 1.48).[24]

2. Blood Interlude

The Polluted Tiber

Water is not the only liquid to play a thematic role in the epic, however. Blood obviously also gets much attention from Lucan in an epic on civil war. Instead of its appearance in regular battle descriptions, however, I wish to concentrate on a few instances in which it either interacts with water or behaves like it. The most extended example of the former occurs during the Book 2 flashback—namely, the clogging of the Tiber by the victims of the Sullan proscriptions, which concludes this long digression:

> *congesta recepit*
> *omnia Tyrrhenus Sullana cadavera gurges.*
> *in fluvium primi cecidere, in corpora summi.*
> *praecipites haesere rates, et strage cruenta*
> *interruptus aquam fluxit prior amnis in aequor,*
> *ad molem stetit unda sequens. iam sanguinis alti*
> *vis sibi fecit iter campumque effusa per omnem*
> *praecipitique ruens Tiberina in flumina rivo*
> *haerentis adiuvit aquas; nec iam alveus amnem*
> *nec retinent ripae, redditque cadavera campo.*
> *tandem Tyrrhenas vix eluctatus in undas*
> *sanguine caeruleum torrenti dividit aequor.* (2.209-20)
>
> The Tyrrhenian stream received all the piled-up Sullan corpses. The first fell into the river, while the last fell onto bodies. Rushing ships were stuck and the river's water was broken up by the bloody slaughter; its front portion flowed into the sea, while the following water stopped at the pile. And now the force of the deep-flowing blood cleared a path and, pouring over the entire field and rushing into the Tiber with headlong stream,

[24] Nero's connection with the sun and Phaethon is suggested by Schönberger (1960) 85 n.6, which would thus lend weight to a negative interpretation of the apostrophe. The bibliography on Lucan's apostrophe to Nero is vast: see Roche (2009) 129-30 for an up-to-date list of the most important contributions.

> assisted the blocked water; neither the river's channel nor its banks contained it, and it returns the corpses to the field. Finally, struggling mightily into the Tyrrhenian waters, it divided the blue sea with a torrent of blood.

It has been suggested that Lucan is influenced here by the conflict between Achilles and the river Scamander in *Iliad* 21, in particular that both rivers eject the corpses that have piled up in their current.[25] Instead of a river god, however, Lucan's Tiber is aided in this task by a rather more sinister element: blood.

This gruesome assistance is necessary because Sulla's proscriptions have claimed so many victims that their bodies impede the natural flow of the Tiber. The corpses in effect form a sort of boundary or unnatural dam (*moles*). Thus, we find here the elements of the formulaic paradigm as applied to rivers—the water's force and the presence of an obstruction—but cruelly reversed. For unlike the banks of the Rubicon or the river at Corfinium, this *moles* is artificial and a symbol of *nefas*. It thus impedes the natural state of things, which is the Tiber's free flow to the sea. Yet unlike the above rivers, the Tiber is too weak by itself to overcome this sinful obstacle. Lucan's solution is to have the blood itself (perhaps from the same corpses obstructing the river) come streaming down the field in order to assist the river. This image is horrifying and surreal because of the apparent lack of agency; the blood seems to surge of its own volition, as if from some unknown overflow. Only with such assistance can the Tiber dislodge the corpses, thus breaking this "boundary."

What are we to make of this remarkable passage? It surely deserves more comment than it has received; in particular, the macabre, even surreal nature of a torrent

[25] Fantham (1992a) 118.

of blood strong enough to dislodge corpses seems to have been overlooked entirely.[26] The obvious implication is that the violence of civil war pollutes the natural order and impedes its processes.[27] Yet spilled blood, surely a sign of *nefas*, is actually *helping* to restore nature's balance by returning the corpses to dry land where they belong. Furthermore, from where does its uncanny force originate? Assuming that *Sullana cadavera* refers only to Sulla's victims, we might conclude that the blood is trying to cleanse the Tiber by casting out the very bodies from which it arose. Yet the idea of blood as a purifying agent is seemingly illogical: the Tiber ends up contaminated, not returned to a pristine condition: *sanguine caeruleum torrenti dividit aequor* (2.220). Even the ocean is sundered (*dividit*), as is fitting in civil war, while the Tiber has completely vanished and a river of blood taken its place (*sanguine…torrenti*).[28] Just as the speaker said of Sulla's proscriptions, *excessit medicina modum* ("the remedy exceeded the limit," 2.142). The unnatural obstruction to the Tiber's flow is removed at the cost of a more ingrained, perhaps even permanent stain. Instead of the idea of overflowing rivers used in a straightforward manner to block Caesar's advance (and hence serving a moral purpose), the motif is here allied with the pollution of civil war upon the very symbol of Rome itself, a stain that, like the pools of blood from Marius' slaughter (*stat cruor in templis*, "the blood stands in the temples," 2.103), cannot be removed, and which transforms Rome forever.

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[26] See Fantham (1992a) 117-20 and Dinter (2005) 306. Henderson (1987) 129 does draw a nice link between Sulla's *tumulus* at 2.222 and the pile of corpses clogging the Tiber.

[27] Cf. Walde (2007) 33: "I protagonisti non si devono soltanto confrontare con diverse, inusuali manifestazioni dell'ordine naturale, ma li turbano essi stessi, quando il sangue dei feriti si mescola alle acque o i cadaveri gettati nelle acque producono lo straripamento dei fiumi."

[28] Loupiac (1998) 161 uses the evocative phrase "sinistre metamorphose."

The behavior of blood and its status as a symbol for civil war are explored more fully elsewhere, chiefly in this passage from Book 6:

> *coit area belli:*
> *hic capitur sanguis terras fluxurus in omnis,*
> *hic et Thessalicae clades Libycaeque tenentur;*
> *aestuat angusta rabies civilis harena* (6.60-63)
>
> The grounds of war contract: here is contained the blood that will flow onto every land, here also Thessalian and Libyan disasters are held; civil war's frenzy seethes in the narrow sand.

These lines set the scene for the campaign at Dyrrhachium, which is to be the prelude to the climactic clash at Pharsalus. As such, they are dense with motifs. First, there is the language of gladiatorial combat (*area* and *harena*), in order to emphasize that this is the first clash in the epic between Pompey and Caesar personally, where previously the civil war has only been carried out by their respective lieutenants. More important for our purpose is the language of containment and overflow. The *area* is in effect an enormous vessel filled with blood (*coit*, and *capitur* in the sense of "contain"), the future blood of Pharsalus (*Thessalicae*) and Thapsus (*Libycae*).[29] And this blood, just like water, is formulaic: the narrower its restraints, the more it strives to overcome them (*aestuat angusta…harena*). Lucan thus clarifies the role of blood from its sudden and mysterious appearance in the Tiber passage: continued civil war not only causes more literal spilling of blood, but also spreads it into in ever more marginal areas of the world, thus drawing more of it into civil war. Lucan thus broadens the overflow and flooding paradigm from merely an extension of the Caesarian formula, as we saw in the previous chapter, to a

[29] Shackleton Bailey is correct in printing Håkanson's emendation of *capitur* in place of the MSS *alitur*. Håkanson (1979) 43 convincingly argues that *alitur* is out of place here because Pompey's forces suffer from famine and disease, but more compelling is his observation that the context (*coit area, tenentur, angusta harena*) demands a verb of enclosure. In addition, Lucan uses the active of *capio* in the sense of "contain" in a few passages of such importance (as will be seen) that it is also drawn into the network of formulaic verbs.

wider metaphor for the entire conflict. In other words, he endows the civil war itself, regardless of Caesar's or Pompey's individual movements, with an overall formulaic arc of breakthrough and overflow.

A Detour on Compression

As Lucan makes use of compression and overflow in a symbolic sense as well, it is instructive to examine some examples of its use here outside of actual liquids. As early as the proem of Book 1, Lucan uses *capio* in this specialized sense:

> *dividitur ferro regnum, populique potentis,*
> *quae mare, quae terras, quae totum possidet orbem,*
> *non **cepit** fortuna duos.* (1.109-11)
>
> The realm is divided by the sword, and the fortune of a powerful people, which possesses the sea, the land, and the entire world, could not contain two.

Lucan is describing the unstable situation before civil war breaks out, in which Pompey and Caesar are vying for preeminence. The poet here figures Fortune as a sort of vessel which is large enough to encompass the Roman world, but not sufficient to contain the ambitions of both.[30] Their mutual swelling will eventually burst this metaphorical container and initiate the war.

For that matter, Lucan's figuring of civil war as a seething mass of liquid about to burst can be traced to his conception of the war as ἐκπύρωσις. This is, of course, the point of the famous simile in Book 1: *sic, cum compage soluta / saecula tot mundi suprema **coegerit** hora / antiquum repetens iterum chaos* (1.72-74). As Roche explains,

[30] Getty (1940) 44 cites *nec te Troia capit* at *Aen*. 9.644 ("nor does Troy contain you") and *non capit regnum duos* at Sen. *Thy.* 444 ("the kingdom does not contain two") as analogues, as well as the supposed words of Philip to his son at Plut. *Alex*. 6.

the last hour occurs when the planets align in the same position as they were at the beginning of time; thus, *coegerit* does not simply have a temporal sense of concluding the series of ages, but also a spatial sense of setting all the heavenly bodies in order before all hell breaks loose.[31] Likewise, Cato's brief vision of civil war as cosmic catastrophe also contains a verb of compression: *cum ruat arduus aether, / terra labet mixto* ***coeuntis*** *pondere mundi* ("when the lofty ether collapses, the earth sinks with the mingled weight of the collapsing universe," 2.290-91).

However, these two cosmic examples of compression are not followed by an outward explosion. The resulting implosion corresponds to another motif that recurs throughout the epic: the crushing of the defeated. We have already seen an example of this in Chapter 1 in the manner of Curio's defeat, which was due to his army being progressively squeezed into a smaller space. Such gathering of mass without a concomitant building up of energy is a "malfunctioning" of the formula, and its ominous shadow lies behind Caesar's personal crisis at the end of the epic.

There is another example of this crushing paradigm in the conclusion to the Book 2 civil war flashback: *quamquam agitant graviora metus, multumque* ***coitur*** */ humani generis maiore in proelia damno* ("yet fear stirs up more weighty matters, and much of the human race is gathered for battle with greater damage," 2.225-26). Fantham, explaining the usual rendering, reads *multum* as an adverbial accusative and thus *coitur* as an impersonal verb, while taking *humani generis* with *damno*.[32] This already has thematic connections with the prior passages, especially that at Dyrrhachium, because it

[31] Roche (2009) 153. In addition, every definition of *cogo* in the *OLD* has a connotation of force, with several (*OLD* 2-8) having the specific sense of concentration. Given these examples, I suggest that this instance of *cogo* in Lucan carries formulaic weight.

[32] Fantham (1992a) 120-21.

is one of Lucan's central paradoxes that civil war is also world war. However, I tentatively venture that *multum* can also taken as a substantive and *humani generis* as a partitive genitive connected to it, thus rendering the phrase as "much of the human race is gathered." Admittedly, this has somewhat shaky grammatical justification,[33] but in the context of Lucan's interest in compression and gathering, I contend that there are thematic grounds for such a rendering. *Multum* as substantive would strengthen the concept of civil war as world war, as well as strengthen the sense of *coitur* as "collect, gather" (*OLD* 6a) rather than only "join battle" (*OLD* 1c).

Finally, Lucan considers the long-term consequences of civil war in terms of space and mass:

> *non aetas haec carpsit edax monimentaque rerum*
> *putria destituit: crimen civile videmus*
> *tot vacuas urbes. generis quo turba redacta est*
> *humani! toto populi qui nascimur orbe*
> *nec muros implere viris nec possumus agros:*
> *urbs nos una* ***capit***. (7.397-402)
>
> Devouring time did not gnaw away at these things nor abandoned monuments in decay: so many empty cities we see are a crime of civil war. To what has the mass of the human race been reduced! We the peoples born in the entire earth can fill neither the walls nor the fields with men: one city contains us.

Such a reduction of strength is a result of civil war: a gathering of force (represented by blood in the Dyrrhachium simile) and its outward explosion must produce a depletion of manpower, or in other words, of mass. As in the above passage, the outsize ambitions of Caesar and Pompey could not be contained, but their carnage results in the reduction of the capacity of the human race (not just of the Roman people) and its permanent

[33] *Coeo* is only listed in the *OLD* as being transitive when taking *societas* or a synonym as an object (*OLD* 10): e.g. Cic. *Rosc.* 21 *ne diutius teneam, iudices, societas coitur* ("lest I detain you longer, judges, a conspiracy was formed"). However, Henderson (1987) 130 renders the line in this manner, as well as Fox (2012) 36 in his translation.

containment within the walls of Rome. This passage is thematically related to the proem of Book 1, in which the narrator fantasizes about possible foreign conquest if not for civil war (1.13ff): with civil war, however, the Roman people are prevented from expanding—a moral as opposed to immoral expansion. Thus, the post-civil war world suffers permanent eclipse without the possibility of regeneration. Instead, the *rus vacuum* ("empty countryside," 7.395) will be filled with Caesar, just as he has already "expanded" to fill Rome in Book 3.

Finally, the reduction of original Roman strength is accompanied by a train of disgusting foreigners in its wake: *nulloque frequentem / cive suo Romam sed mundi faece repletam / cladis eo dedimus* ("and we have given Rome, not teeming with any of its own citizens but stuffed with the world's filth, over to such calamity," 7.404-06). Caesar's victory at Pharsalus means that Rome's original strength is reduced and will thus be kept inside the city walls, while the city itself is helpless to resist an influx of bilge water, so to speak. Caesar himself floods over the world, while Rome herself is flooded with foreign sewage.

Returning to lines 6.60-63, we may conclude that the image of overflow contained in these lines is borne out when civil war spreads to the ends of the earth, as Pompey finds a foe in his Egyptian client kingdom, Caesar pursues him there only to be caught a struggle for his own life, and Cato fights Caesarian snakes in Libya. *Clades Libycae* at 6.63 is remarkable, since it suggests not only a sort of determinism in that the disaster in Libya (presumably the Battle of Thapsus) could only come about after Dyrrhachium and Pharsalus, but that the clash, or perhaps the blood within this clash, was itself literally

part of the mass of "blood" present at Dyrrhachium, so that all future civil war conflicts are in some sense offshoots or "rivulets" of the original quantity of blood contained here.

Pressing the analogy further, we might ask ourselves what happens to a liquid after it flows over. No matter how great the volume or unstoppable the current, sooner or later any liquid without a container must disperse and spread itself thin enough so as eventually to lose vitality. Thus fragmented, civil war itself loses meaning and "strength," as Cato fights his quasi-mythical snakes and Caesar is distracted by Troy and the Nile, finally fighting Egyptians for his very survival. Even the very ending of the epic enacts this shapelessness: the lack of a satisfying conclusion that wraps up the loose ends is the final symptom of loss of narrative drive.

3. The Flood at Ilerda

It is also worth expanding the field of inquiry from rivers to water in general, since in at least two important instances this element is in opposition to Caesar. The first is the campaign at Ilerda which opens Book 4. This city is surrounded by the river Sicoris:

> *placidis praelabitur undis*
> *Hesperios inter Sicoris non ultimus amnis,*
> *saxeus ingenti quem pons amplectitur arcu*
> *hibernas passurus aquas.* (4.13-16)
>
> The Sicoris, which a rocky bridge about to withstand its winter waters spans with a huge arch, is not the least among the western rivers and glides by with peaceful waters.

This description, superficially neutral or even pleasant,[34] conceals a hidden tension. While the Sicoris is harmless in 4.13, its potential for growth is shown three lines later. Although the swelling water does not actually amount to anything, the image serves as a prelude to the massive flood about to occur in this episode.[35] In addition, the stone bridge acts as a boundary that suggests the ghost of a formulaic presence: the swelling river exerts pressure on its "barrier."

In general, Lucan seems to envision the landscape surrounding Ilerda as particularly fluid and unstable: not only do the bodies of water contain possibilities of disruption, but even the solid earth itself. Consider the hill on which Ilerda itself is situated: *colle tumet modico lenique excrevit in altum / pingue solum tumulo* ("the rich land swells with a modest hill and grows to a height with a gentle mound," 4.11-12), and Ilerda itself *surgit* ("rises," 4.13). But Lucan goes even further:

> *explicat hinc tellus campos effusa patentis*
> *vix oculo prendente modum, camposque coerces,*
> *Cinga rapax…* (4.19-21)
>
> From here the land, spreading wide, unfolds open fields (the eye can hardly grasp its limit), and you, greedy Cinga, confine the plains…

This is an extraordinarily fluid conception of solid ground, as if the landscape itself has lost definition—all the more so given that the previous line offered a river as the dividing marker between the Pompeian and Caesarian camps: *medius dirimit tentoria gurges* ("in the middle the river waters divide the tents," 4.18). The environment seems to have come alive: *explicat, effusa*, and *patentis* all suggest "growth" that is only heightened by *vix oculo prendente modum* (the last word is an important motif in the text; cf. the Nile's lack

[34] Loupiac (1998) 84.

[35] As Asso (2010) 113 notes (though he does not point out the latent force in 4.16).

of *modus* at 10.331). The earth, which is supposed to be the most stable element that exists, is here in danger of losing form as it flows out into infinity. Again, it is paradoxically water of all elements that provides a sort of structure (*camposque coerces*).

In this context, even before the flood itself, the landscape is already in flux, or at least in danger of it. The flood, which erases distinctions (*rerum discrimina miscet*, "it dissolves nature's distinctions," 4.104), merely actualizes what is already latent in the location itself. As Lucan describes it, the area surrounding Ilerda is basically a giant body of water; it seems that fluids are not only used literally or as metaphors for civil war, but that their properties even take over the behavior of solid land.

With this pregnant background, we now turn to the actual flood. We have seen how Caesar has "flooded" his way down Italy in the first three books: nature now strikes back. Lucan begins this section with an evocative and typically paradoxical portrait of the winter landscape:

> *pigro bruma gelu siccisque Aquilonibus haerens*
> *aethere constricto pluvias in nube tenebat.*
> *urebant montana nives camposque iacentes*
> *non duraturae conspecto sole pruinae,*
> *atque omnis propior mergenti sidera caelo*
> *aruerat tellus hiberno dura sereno*. (4.50-55)
>
> The winter, clinging with sluggish ice and dry north wind, congealed the sky and held the rains in their clouds. The snows were scorching the mountainous areas, and likewise frosts that would not last when the sun was seen were scorching the low-lying plains, and all land near the sky that sinks the stars was parched, hard in the clear winter sky.

The world is not only silent, but is nearly dead. The chief characteristic of winter is that water, as ice, is locked and sluggish (*pigro…haerens...aethere*

constricto…pluvias…tenebat). There is no motion and no energy—qualities that, as we have come to see, are characteristic of water in full force.

However, once spring arrives, the east wind blows clouds toward the west. In typical ethnographic fashion, Lucan specifies the peoples whom these clouds normally cover: *quas sentit Arabs et quas Gangetica tellus / exhalat nebulas* ("clouds which the Arab experiences and which the earth around the Ganges breaths forth," 4.64-65).[36] Now Lucan has already indicated that the flood will be an extension of the war: *cetera bello / fata dedit variis incertus motibus aer* ("the shifting air with its varied movement decided the outcome of the rest of the war," 4.48-49).[37] It is also significant that these clouds originate from the east. As we will see in the next chapter, Pompey tries to enlist his eastern client kingdoms, represented as rivers, in the fight against Caesar, and indeed the epic concludes with Caesar's mental and physical struggles in Egypt. In addition, while it seems that this foreign water is on the attack, Lucan emphasizes that it is usually for defense from the sun (which, as will be seen, is connected to Caesar): *quidquid defenderat Indos* ("whatever had guarded the Indians," 4.67).[38] In addition, the ethnonyms *Nabataeis* (4.63) and *Arabs* (4.64) refer to peoples conquered by Pompey.[39] Again, this subtly connects Pompey to water through his relationship with eastern nations.

Lucan then describes the formation of the rainclouds and the onset of rain:

hic, ubi iam Zephyri fines, et summus Olympi

[36] Masters (1992) 62 notes that the Eurus, which gathers these clouds, is Pompeian because of Pompey's association with the east.

[37] Asso (2010) 122 observes that both sides must take a passive role as the *aer* becomes the agent.

[38] Asso (2010) 128 (quoting the *Comm. Bern.*).

[39] Plut. *Pomp*. 41; also Fantham (1992a) 194 on 2.590-4 and Asso (2010) 127.

> *cardo tenet Tethyn, vetitae transcurrere densos*
> *involvere globos, congestumque aeris atri*
> *vix recipit spatium quod separat aethere terram.*
> *iamque polo pressae largos densantur in imbres*
> *spissataeque fluunt…* (4.72-77)
>
> Here, where the borders of the Zephyr are and the highest pivot of Olympus holds Tethys, [the clouds] roll up in thick masses, forbidden to cross over, and the space that separates earth from ether can hardly hold the piling-up of black air. And now, pressed by the sky, they are compressed into copious rain and they flow condensed…

The storm that causes the flooding in Spain is produced by an eminently formulaic process. As soon as the diffuse mist makes contact with the western barrier (*fines*) where sky meets ocean, such unconquerable resistance (*vetitae transcurrere*) forces it to grow dense and compact (*densos involvere globos*). As the clouds condense into water, they have no place to go but down: this is the equivalent of riverine overflow or the Caesarian breakthrough. This is an important development for water, however: the Rubicon showed incipient signs of such a formulaic buildup of strength, but the hypothetical outcome from the river at Corfinium would have been accomplished by a removal of the bridge, its only barrier; the river itself did not surge. That the aerial moisture does change as a result of meeting a barrier is a notable advance in the development of the overflow variant of the formula, which will culminate in the nakedly Caesarian behavior that Acoreus ascribes to the Nile. Finally, the rainbow attracting all the water that falls from the sky is an example of regeneration: *Oceanumque bibit raptosque ad nubila fluctus / pertulit et caelo defusum reddidit aequor* ("and it drinks Ocean and conveys the stolen waters to the clouds and returns the sea poured from heaven," 4.81-82).[40] Thus Lucan clearly describes the entire storm scene as a perfect formulaic cycle.

[40] See Sen. *NQ* 1.3-8 for a detailed discussion on rainbows.

And if the reader is unsure about the status of these clouds as an anti-Caesarian force, Lucan adds a final, unmistakable detail: *nec servant fulmina flammas; / quamvis crebra micent, extinguunt fulgura nimbi* ("nor do the thunderbolts preserve their fire; although they flash constantly, the stormclouds extinguish the lightning flashes," 4.77-78). The very thunderbolts normally produced inside rainclouds are now muffled by an excess of water. Such a description in a sense overrides the power of the Book 1 bolt simile by reminding the reader that however powerful the Caesarian thunderbolt may be, it is at the mercy of the clouds from which it arises, and which are composed of an element hostile to its own essence. No longer are clouds the thunderbolt's haven, but its adversary.

Yet from another perspective, a stormcloud's muffling of its own lightning is a clear sign of nature being out of balance. Rivers, the main natural adversaries of Caesar, are themselves obliterated by the excess water flowing into them:

> *tum quae solitis e fontibus exit*
> *non habet unda vias; tam largas alveus omnis*
> *a ripis accepit aquas*. (4.85-87)
>
> Then the water which issues from its usual source finds no path; so much water does the riverbed receive from its banks.

Even rocks seem to lose definition by being immersed in water: *fractoque madescunt / saxa gelu* ("and the rocks are drenched when the ice is broken," 4.84-85).[41] This is what Loupiac has described as water's capacity to engulf and erode all substances.[42] Time

[41] Asso (2010) 132, arguing that water as one of the elemental stages of matter causes objects to revert to chaos.

[42] Loupiac (1998) *inter alia* 100, 104-08, 190.

actually seems to flow backwards, as the world returns to chaos.[43] Eventually the water comes to a halt, as does all human activity:

> *iam naufraga campo*
> *Caesaris arma natant, impulsaque gurgite multo*
> *castra labant; alto restagnant flumina vallo*. (4.87-89)
>
> Now Caesar's army floats shipwrecked on the plain, and his camp totters, buffeted by a great mass of water; the rivers pool up in the high rampart.

Caesar, whose very essence is swift, reckless motion, has now been stilled (*labant*), thus halted (at least temporarily).[44] But what is the price? As Lucan describes at 4.90-97, flooding and stagnant water produce hunger and famine, thus also destroying life.[45] Moreover, the outlines of the landscape begin to disappear: *iam tumuli collesque latent, iam flumina cuncta / condidit una palus vastaque voragine mersit* ("now the mounds and hills are hidden, now one swamp conceals all the rivers and engulfs them in a huge chasm," 4.98-99). Even the sun seems to have been extinguished: *nec Phoebum surgere sentit / nox subtexta polo* ("nor does the night, woven in the sky, perceive Phoebus rising," 4.103-04). To drive the point home, Lucan describes the result in terms similar to that of primordial chaos: *rerum discrimina miscet / deformis caeli facies iunctaeque tenebrae* ("the disfigured aspect of heaven and the linked shadows confound nature's distinctions," 4.104-05);[46] and similar even to Antarctica (4.106-09), a place perpetually barren and devoid of life.[47]

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[43] As Asso (2010) 132 seems to suggest in his comment on 4.85-87.

[44] Asso (2010) 119 perceptively notes the significance of this verb in Book 4.

[45] Walde (2007) 32 sees an opposition between running water as life-giving as opposed to potentially fatal stagnant water.

[46] Asso (2010) 134.

[47] Asso (2010) 135.

We seem to have reached a kind of entropic state: the simultaneous release of all restraints on water has resulted in the temporary defeat of Caesar, but at the cost of obliterating all distinction and movement in the world.[48] Just as civil war returns the world to chaos (recall in Lucan's ekpyrotic simile that the last hour *antiquum repetens iterum chaos*, "again seeking ancient chaos," 1.74), so resistance to Caesar leads instead to the same outcome. Instead of Caesar's overflow occupying all available space as in Book 3 (*omnia Caesar erat*), water takes the role of dominating entity instead, subsuming everything into itself. There is no exit: Caesar's domination results in a ruined Italy (1.24-32) and depleted Rome (7.399-407), while aquatic domination is a kingdom of death, everything as dead as stagnant water after it has expended its energy in overflow. Yet this is exactly what the poet wants, going so far as to invoke Jupiter and Neptune (4.110-120) into somehow making this situation permanent, all for the sake of stopping civil war: *et miseras bellis civilibus eripe terras* ("and remove these wretched lands from civil war," 4.120). However, such religious invocation in an epic so famously devoid of the Olympian deities only highlights this invocation as unrealistic: only in a mythological world is such permanence perhaps possible. Indeed, κατακλυσμός results in the rebirth of the world.

The reawakening of the world, then, is ambiguous. On the one hand, the language that Lucan uses of the sun as it causes the water to recede is reminiscent of civil war (*et par Phoebus aquis*, "and Phoebus, a match for the waters," 4.124); the sun is as much a rival to water as Pompey is to Caesar. Yet the receding of the flood-waters shows that, unlike the false equivalence between the human adversaries, the natural elements are

[48] Loupiac (1998) 12 describes flood-water as ambiguous, promising renewal but only after cataclysm.

really in balance with each other. Opposition in nature is essentially healthy, as it keeps one element from dominating the others at the expense of life on earth. On the other hand, however, such restoration of natural balance returns the human world to its inexorable march toward catastrophe at Pharsalus. In Lucan's world, the cost of nature's survival is the ruination of mankind. And so the flood section ends on a note of anticlimax: after the awesome accumulation of water (rhetorically reminiscent of both mythological chaos and Stoic cataclysm) that could stop even Caesar in his tracks, we end up with the bathetic picture of Caesar punishing the Sicoris by diverting its flood into smaller channels—bathetic because I take *dat poenas maioris aquae* ("it suffers the punishment for its increased water," 4.143) to mean that Caesar not only punishes the river for its own swelling, but that in effect it is made a scapegoat for the totality of water in this world that Caesar cannot hope to punish (and in any case its extra waters come from the stormclouds). Lucan has decisively shown that water as a physical force of anti-Caesarian resistance is a dead end: in order to conquer Caesar, nature must end up obliterating itself.

4. The Storm

As we saw in the previous chapter, Caesar faces two crises in Book 5 that are the most serious thus far in the epic. The mutiny threatened his ability to continue the war, while the storm endangers his very life. Now a storm scene is a typical piece of epic furniture, but it also pits Caesar against the largest and deadliest mass of water he has yet encountered. Prior to this, however, he encounters exactly the opposite situation. After the mutiny, Caesar travels to Rome, where he is made dictator and consul. At the same

time, he sends his men to Brundisium to raise a fleet in preparation for sailing to Epirus. When he meets them there, they are at first uneasy about embarking for Greece because of the weather: *clausas ventis brumalibus undas / invenit et pavidas hiberno sidere classes* ("he finds the waters barred by winter winds and the fleets timid under the winter's stars," 5.407-08). Once again, that all-important word *mora* appears: *turpe duci visum rapiendi tempora belli / in segnes exisse moras* ("to the general it seemed shameful that the time for hastening war developed into sluggish delay," 5.409-10). His army's fears and nature's threats merge into one delay, similar to the way in which Caesar's own hesitation, the *imago patriae* and the swelling Rubicon blended together. Caesar thus feels it necessary to exhort his men with a speech. He proclaims that it is actually better for them to face the strong blasts of winter winds directly rather than the erratic winds of spring:

> *fortius hiberni flatus caelumque fretumque,*
> *cum cepere, tenent quam quos incumbere certos*
> *perfida nubiferi vetat inconstantia veris*. (5.413-15)
>
> Stronger do winter's winds occupy sky and sea when they seize it, than those which the treacherous uncertainty of cloud-bearing spring forbid to settle firmly.

Now Caesar's use of moral language to describe spring is interesting in itself, considering the gross immorality of his rationale for waging civil war; it is a clever rhetorical trick to tie the men into their own sense of fighting for right (despite figures such as Laelius) and depicting natural opponents in stock barbarian terms (*perfida* reminiscent of *Libycas…fraudes* describing Juba's treacherous warfare at 4.736). However, rather than merely amounting to rhetorical play, Caesar's speech also reinforces his characterization as a formulaic being. Even though he is not strictly facing the winds as an opponent, he

still craves direct force and not erratic behavior that is hard to pin down. Likewise his rejection of *maris anfractus* ("the bend of ocean's shore," 5.416) in favor of the open sea: Caesar dislikes anything tortuous, inflexible or indirect. Formulaically speaking, Caesar wants his men to meet these challenges so that they may remove their self-imposed *morae,* but he also needs such challenges in order that his energy might not dissipate (as he warns in his Book 3 simile at Massilia).

Thus, Caesar welcomes the potential danger of strong winter winds, stressing their greater ability to convey them to their destination: *hic utinam summi curvet carchesia mali / incumbatque furens et Graia ad moenia perflet* ("if only this would bend the highest mastheads and settle upon us and blow right to the Greek walls," 5.418-19). His speech thus provides a rationale for the otherwise inexplicable and foolhardy decision to sail to Italy alone in order to collect the remainder of his troops. Like the lion in the Book 1 simile, Caesar feeds off danger. The deadlier the situation, the more energized he becomes. Appropriately, he ends his speech with a formulaic verb: *rumpite quae retinent felices vincula proras* ("break the chains that restrain our fortunate prows," 5.422). This verb gains additional resonance given its structural context: after suffering a low point in strength after the mutiny, Caesar is trying to reenergize his army and have them initiate another large-scale formulaic arc after his successes in the first three books. The fact that he will be facing the ocean and the storm is especially apt here, since Caesar suffers a setback due to rain and flooding in Spain: thus Book 5 continues the struggle of Caesar against water from the previous book.

Yet nature in its spite denies Caesar exactly what he wants, and the sea falls into a dead calm. Lucan's description of a marine landscape devoid of energy recalls the result

of the Book 4 flood. He explicitly compares the ocean to a swamp: *aequora lenta iacent, alto torpore ligatae / pigrius immotis haesere paludibus undae* ("the sea lies sluggish, the waves, bound by deep lethargy, cling more inertly than motionless swamps," 5.434-35). Lucan's simile likening the ocean to the frozen Black Sea near the mouth of the Danube clarifies the condition: *immensumque gelu tegitur mare* ("and the boundless sea is covered with ice," 5.438) and *fluctuque latente* ("and with hidden wave," 5.440) suggest that Caesar and his men are facing the ocean in a dormant condition, and that activity, hidden underneath the surface, will eventually resume. However, for the time being it seems to them as if it has ceased functioning entirely: *veluti deserta regente / aequora natura cessant* ("the seas are idle as though abandoned by governing nature," 5.443-44). As in Book 4, Caesar's progress can only be halted at the cost of a universe that is completely entropic. Lucan even describes the complete safety of the ocean in this case in ironic terms: *caelo languente fretoque / naufragii spes omnis abit* ("with a torpid sky and sea, every chance of shipwreck is gone," 5.454-55). It is the threat of violent destruction that fuels the formula: Caesar is only truly alive when his life is in peril. Once again, however, nature awakens, following the course of its own cycle, thus allowing Caesar to reaches Epirus safely (5.460).

Having observed Caesar's attitude toward the proper conditions of an ocean voyage, we can conclude that his need for strong opposition is a subtext that underlies Caesar's decision to undertake the hazardous journey back to Italy in order to collect the rest of his troops.[49] Exasperated at Antony's sluggishness (*morantem*, "delaying,"

[49] *Pace* Matthews (2008) 69, who argues that Caesar undertakes the journey on a whim.

5.480), he decides to cross over to the peninsula himself.[50] Yet the crucial difference about this delay is that, like that of his troops earlier before crossing over to Epirus, it occurs on his own side. Accordingly, it is also a chance for Caesar to re-collect his forces in preparation for the Thessalian campaign. As he says to Antony, *numquid inexperto tua credimus arma profundo / inque novos traheris casus?* ("surely we are not entrusting your army to the untested deep, nor are you dragged into new circumstances?" 5.486-87). Caesar is not asking Antony to sail off on his own, but to rejoin his commander: he desires centripetal, not centrifugal movement. His request and, ultimately, his journey by boat are all part of the macro-formulaic arc of regeneration for the final showdown with Pompey in Books 6 and 7. Accordingly, Caesar's last statement to Antony, though cryptic, gains meaning under this interpretation: *non ex aequo divisimus orbem; / Epirum Caesarque tenet totusque senatus, / Ausoniam tu solus habes* ("we have not divided the world equally; Caesar and the entire senate hold Epirus, while you alone keep Ausonia," 5.495-97). Though hyperbolic from a conventional point of view because it suggests that Antony's loyalty is not completely firm,[51] it makes sense in terms of the formula. Caesar is contesting Pompey and the republicans for control of Epirus (and by extension Greece); he cannot afford to have one of his lieutenants "occupying" already-conquered territory for fear of disintegration. Italy must be reintegrated into the Caesarian whole.

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[50] Lucan describes Antony as *iam tum civili meditatus Leucada bello* ("already then contemplating Leucas for civil war," 5.479). If we assume that this is the reason for Antony's delay, the statement is itself puzzling due to its sheer implausibility. Why would Antony be contemplating a battle that would not occur for another seventeen years, and the existence of which is predicated on Caesar's death? Either Antony must have prophetic gifts, or something else is happening. It seems that Lucan is implying, though somewhat crudely, that delay causes the Caesarians to wander and civil war to break up, resulting in Antony contemplating his own battles. Dissipation will come to affect both sides after Book 7, as Caesar, Cato and Pompey each pursue their own mini-civil wars. Caesar's wish to travel to Italy here can thus be seen as trying to restore coherence and discipline to his side before the final campaign in Thessaly.

[51] As Matthews (2008) 47-48 suggests. There is, however, no hint of any disloyalty on Antony's part in the other sources. Caesar's statement does, however, make him appear paranoid, which is in keeping with his character.

Before he can commence sailing, however, he must first convince a certain Amyclas to ferry him.[52] The interaction between Caesar and Amyclas foreshadows in certain aspects that between Caesar and Acoreus in the last book. In both passages, Caesar is stripped of his fearsome legions that enable his formulaic actions. Ironically, here Caesar willingly does what he takes pains to prevent in the mutiny scene—he relies only on himself. In doing so, he becomes even bolder than a slave: *Caesar sollicito per vasta silentia gressu / vix famulis audenda parat, cunctisque relictis / sola placet Fortuna comes* ("Caesar, anxiously walking through vast silence, prepares business that not even slaves dare, and abandoning all else, has Fortune as his only companion," 5.508-10). Here Lucan cuts right to the heart of the paradox of *solus Caesar*: he is at his weakest, as lowly as a slave (or a mere *miles* just like his mutinying soldiers, as Lucan puts it at 5.254). Yet facing the wrath of nature alone is also Caesar acting at his bravest, and a way to test just how strong his personal *fortuna* is.

The first aspect comes to the fore in his interaction with Amyclas. When he offhandedly addresses Caesar as *quisnam…naufragus* ("what shipwrecked man," 5.521), he is more correct than he knows.[53] Without his army, Caesar is a mere fragment of himself: though he may boast, as in his Book 5 speech against the mutineers, that he is actually an ocean, to an outside observer he is of course just a mortal. In addition, *naufragus* also emphasizes the fragility of Caesar as mere mortal once stripped of his army. On his own, he is devoid of that "superhuman" terror that is such a hallmark of his portrayal in the *Bellum Civile*. As merely a mortal in a little boat, there is nothing that

[52] None of the other sources of Caesar's storm crossing (Val. Max. 9.8.2, Plut. *Caesar* 38, App. *BC* 2.57-58) mentions Amyclas, but only an anonymous captain; Caesar himself omits the crossing entirely. Matthews (2008) 87-90 notes the influence of hospitality narratives on this episode, for example that of Baucis and Philemon in Ovid *Met.* 8.

[53] Not simply ironic, as Matthews (2008) 97-98 suggests.

distinguishes Caesar from a nameless *naufragus*. Lucan thereby links this scene to his encounter with Acoreus (and the Nile through Acoreus), and against the other encounters with rivers, in which he is backed up by (and thus at one with) the *furor* of his army. In other words, the storm scene puts Caesar into a moment of extreme physical vulnerability, which will look forward to that moment five books later in which he is similarly alone against Acoreus, which in turn leads to his other moment of supreme physical danger while in the midst of resisting the Egyptian conspiracy against his life.

This actually puts him in the same position as Amyclas, who, as a ship's pilot, is a civilian and is thus uninvolved with the war: *securus belli* ("unconcerned with war," 5.526). *Securus* is an important adjective in the epic generally, describing figures as varied as Cato, Sulla, and Caesar (see Chapter 6 for more on this word and its complications when applied to Cato).[54] The particular shade that applies to Amyclas here is that of the Pompeian soldiers who surrender to Caesar in Book 4 (*securis oneris*, "free of burden," 4.398). Lucan describes them as spectators of civil war now who have no stake in the game: *sic proelia soli / nullo spectant civilia voto* ("thus they alone observe the battles of civil war with no wish," 4.400-01). Amyclas is similarly an unknown, but his main claim to safety is his poverty: *praedam civilibus armis / scit non esse casas* ("he knows that cottages are no prize in civil war," 5.526-27). Thus even if Caesar were fully armed he would have nothing to fear; now that Caesar is disarmed and alone, he finds himself actually dependent on the captain's services. Thus, Amyclas' question *quem nostrae Fortuna coegit / auxilium sperare casae?* ("whom has Fortune compelled to seek the assistance of our hut?" 5.522-23) is a sly ironic rebuttal on the poet's part to Caesar's

[54] Matthews (2008) 158-59 emphasizes the importance of this adjective in depicting Amyclas, while contrasting it with Caesar's *securitas*, which is based on a sort of numbness induced by great frenzy, as shown in the Book 1 lion simile.

Fortuna at 5.510. Caesar may think Fortune serves him as his personal goddess, but at this moment he needs Amyclas much more than Amyclas needs him.

Amyclas' erudite speech to Caesar on signs of inclement weather is designed to dissuade Caesar from his journey.[55] The purpose behind his speech thus likens him to Acoreus somewhat, as will be seen, but it also reveals differences with the priest. As for similarities, Amyclas presents an imposing scientific knowledge of nature, and likewise uses this display of learning to discourage Caesar from confronting and possibly conquering a body of water: *multa quidem prohibent nocturno credere ponto* ("many things indeed forbid trust in the ocean at night," 5.540). This aim is increased by the subtext:

> *nam sol non rutilas deduxit in aequora nubes*
> *concordesque tulit radios: Noton altera Phoebi,*
> *altera pars Borean diducta luce vocabat.*
> *orbe quoque exhaustus medio languensque recessit*
> *spectantis oculos infirmo lumine passus.* (5.541-45)
>
> For the sun did not attract the ruddy clouds onto the sea or bring harmonious rays: one part of Phoebus called forth Notus, the other part Boreas, its light pulled apart. Furthermore the middle of its orb was drained, and it withdrew in exhaustion, allowing eyes to view it due to its weak light.

Amyclas paints a picture of a sun that is weak (*exhaustus, languens*) and also at war with itself (*non…concordes…radios*). If we keep in mind that Caesar has been associated with the sun and its fiery powers throughout the epic, then Amyclas is presenting evidence that might have the effect of discouraging him by suggesting that Caesar's fiery powers are too weak to face the full aquatic onslaught of the storm. What strengthens the connection

[55] For Lucan's sources, see Matthews (2008) 114-18.

between Caesar and the sun as described here is the internal allusion to viewing: the Caesarian force that was brilliant enough to blind in the form of lightning (*obliqua praestringens lumina flamma*, 1.154) is now weak enough to permit direct viewing. Moreover, the sun is also drained of strength at its very core. Likewise, Caesar, reduced to being a mere mortal, is far weaker than in his customary incarnation. Thus, without recognizing who Caesar is, Amyclas still presents a solar condition that is unfavorable to him. Still, he agrees to help Caesar in fulfilling any important tasks (*si magnarum poscunt discrimina rerum, / haud dubitem praebere manus,* "if the crises of great matters demand it, I should hardly hesitate to offer assistance," 5.557-58), which shows a fundamental difference from Acoreus. Amyclas is not truly interested in resisting Caesar, only in offering a disinterested evaluation of the meteorological evidence.[56] This is fitting for one who is outside the civil war and has no stake in its outcome; *magnarum…discrimina rerum* shows both acknowledgment of the civil war and a lack of basic interest in its outcome or details. After all, Amyclas obviously does not represent the storm in any fashion as much as Acoreus is the sacred keeper of lore on the Nile.

As if on cue, a storm begins brewing as soon as they put out to sea.[57] Not only do comets begin streaking in the skies (*dispersos traxere cadentia sulcos / sidera*, "falling stars dragged their scattered trails," 5.562-63), but even stars begin to lose their bearing (*summis etiam quae fixa tenentur / astra polis sunt visa quati*, "even the stars which are held in place in the highest part of the sky seemed to tremble," 5.563-64). Comets are certainly a portent of disaster (Lucan includes them at 1.526-29 among various omens of

[56] Matthews (2008) 131 also notes Amyclas' disregard for the wealth that Caesar promises at 5.536-37 in return for helping him safely cross the ocean, a sign of his basic humility.

[57] Matthews (2008) 133 offers literary models for Lucan's storm, namely *Od.* 5 and 12, *Aen.* 1, 3 and 5, Ovid *Met.* 11, and Seneca's *Agamemnon*.

civil war), but the fact that normally stable stars begin to be loosened is reminiscent of nothing less than a Stoic collapse of the universe and a return to chaos.[58] Again, as in Book 4, Lucan suggests that the only way to stop Caesar (and hence civil war) is to destroy the universe, and again as in the previous book, water will be the agent of this catastrophe.

The rising commotion of the sea, wind, and rain prompts Amyclas to suggest abandoning the expedition, but Caesar will have none of it. Where the seaman sees confusion all around him (*Zephyros intendat an Austros / incertum est; puppim dubius ferit undique pontus*, "it is unclear whether it threatens with Zephyr or Auster; the shifting ocean strikes the boat from all sides," 5.569-70), Caesar has the ironclad resolve of one who believes himself to be a god, or at least equal to the forces of nature at its most violent: *Italiam si caelo auctore recusas / me pete* ("if you refuse Italy with heaven's authority, seek it with mine," 5.579-80). Yet in his next breath he describes himself as one *quem numina numquam / destituunt* ("whom the gods never desert," 5.580-81), implying a traditional subordination to the gods, who are in any case absent from Lucan's poem.

This confusion about whether Caesar or the gods is in control is mirrored by the obfuscation as to his role: is he being active or passive here? One moment Caesar waxes formulaic: *medias perrumpe procellas / tutela secure mea* ("smash through the middle of the tempest, safe with my guidance," 5.583-84). The verb is one of the original Caesarian verbs, and *secure* is reminiscent of the lion in the Book 1 simile as it recklessly

[58] In keeping with the theme of Caesar's endangerment, the comets may also suggest the *sidus Iulium* which appeared after Caesar's assassination (see Suet. *Iul.* 88 and Plut. *Caes.* 69).

leaps through the incoming spear.[59] Yet immediately afterwards he pictures himself as an immovable object whose only role is to withstand the cosmic forces being arrayed against him: *caeli iste fretique, / non puppis nostrae labor est: hanc Caesare pressam / a fluctu defendet onus* ("this is work for heaven and ocean, not for our vessel: the burden will defend it from the waves due to Caesar's weight," 5.584-86). Note *labor* here: Caesar proclaims that they need not even expend any energy at all, a total reversal of his customary role.[60] His statement goes without saying, of course, because Caesar can have no active power by himself against the forces of nature. *Onus* is important: as noted, the word conveys the heft of a god, which fits Caesar's self-conception.[61] In formulaic terms, Caesar positions himself as a barrier that defies the winds, whose eventual goal is to exhaust them: *nec longa furori / ventorum saevo dabitur mora: proderit undis / ista ratis* ("nor will long delay be granted to the winds' savage fury: this boat will benefit the waters," 5.586-88). *Mora* may seem like an odd choice to describe the raging winds; after all, Caesar compares himself to winds in his Book 3 simile. Yet this usage is strangely appropriate, for remember that it is Caesar who is speaking: anything that opposes him must be a *mora* or obstacle. Thus, even though he is in a passive position here, he still views himself as active and his adversaries, the winds, as the obstacles. Yet if he is to be an obstacle, being Caesar, he will be an indestructible one—hence his proclamation that his mere presence will wear down the winds. Caesar's self-image as

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[59] As Matthews (2008) 159 notes.

[60] Matthews (2008) 160-61 only sees *labor* as passive here in the sense of "suffering"; I take her point, but contend that both senses fit. Caesar wants the winds and ocean both to convey him to his destination, but also to tire themselves out in the process so that they do not destroy the boat.

[61] *Onus* recalls the description of the apotheosized Nero: *sentiet axis onus* ("the axis will feel this load," 1.57); Matthews (2008) 161-62 suggests a general reference to the great weight of the gods. Another allusion in light of the comparison of the Stygian conditions created by the storm may be found in Aeneas' weighin down Charon's skiff (*Aen*. 6.412-14).

immovable object is striking because it is reminiscent of Cato's own conception of himself in Book 2 as a target of universal violence; conversely, one might see Caesarian behavior creeping into Cato's Stoic stance there.[62] In terms of Book 5's place in the overall structure of the epic, however, Caesar's merging with Cato is to be expected: as we saw in Chapter 2, he is at his weakest in this book, separated from his men and now utterly alone. Just as we will see Pompey becoming formulaic in Book 6 as he grows stronger, so a weakened Caesar begins to behave like Cato.

As if on cue, this defiant self-definition by Caesar initiates the storm in all its full fury. As is well-acknowledged, the storm is once again another example of Stoic cataclysm.[63] The leveling of mountains and earth (with the latter conquering the former) at 5.615-17 leads to a general invasion of the upper world by the infernal (*latet obsitus aer / infernae pallore domus*, "the air is hidden, engulfed by the pallor of the underworld," 5.627-28). Appropriately given the elemental symbolism at work in the epic, even the (Caesarian) lightning is extinguished in this most paradoxical of storms: *lux etiam metuenda perit, nec fulgura currunt / clara, sed obscurum nimbosus dissilit aer* ("the dreadful light also disappears, nor does bright lightning streak, but the cloudy air shatters darkly," 5.630-31). Yet this is exactly what happened as well in the Ilerda thunderstorm. In both cases, Caesar, Jupiter's replacement, is symbolically snuffed out by watery forces. Finally, the storm reaches its climax as Lucan openly describes a universe teetering on the brink of catastrophe: *extimuit natura chaos; rupisse videntur / concordes elementa moras* ("nature feared chaos; the elements seem to have broken their harmonious impediments," 5.634-35). *Compages*, that crucial word in the Book 1

[62] Matthews (2008) 151-52 notes the Stoic influence here.

[63] See e.g. Lapidge (1979) 367-68 and Matthews (2008) 135ff.

ἐκπύρωσις simile, is once again invoked: *motaque poli compage laborant* ("the heavens struggle as their structure is shaken," 5.633). In trying to stop Caesar, the storm inevitably takes on the Caesarian qualities of bursting *morae*, but this itself results in a hastening of the end of the world.

Yet for all the massive violence directed against Caesar, it is fatally compromised by warring within itself. Most evident is the "battle of the winds," which leads to stasis in nature: *et dubium pendet, vento cui concidat, aequor* ("and the doubtful sea is in suspense as to which wind it should succumb," 5.602).[64] Lucan elaborates this idea later:

> *non Euri cessasse minas, non imbribus atrum*
> *Aeolii iacuisse Notum sub carcere saxi*
> *crediderim; cunctos solita de parte ruentis*
> *defendisse suas violento turbine terras,*
> *sic pelagus mansisse loco.* (5.608-12)
>
> I could believe that Eurus' theats were not idle, that Notus, black with rain, did not lie in the prison of Aeolus' rock; that all of them, rushing from their usual location, defended their own lands with violent whirlwind, that in this way the sea remained in its place.

The Stoic concept that nature mirrors the events of the human world is fine in itself, but it proves rather useless when nature is actually supposed to be waging war against Caesar. Instead of their mounting a united front against Caesar, Lucan demonstrates that these natural forces degenerate into squabbling with each other and thus dissipate their force; the weakness in nature is already hinted at in a simile describing Jupiter's thunderbolt as worn out (*sic rector Olympi / cuspide fraterna lassatum in saecula fulmen / adiuvit*, "thus the ruler of Olympus assisted his lightning bolts, worn down against generations of man, with his brother's spear-point," 5.620-22), a situation which is reflected the absence of

[64] See Matthews (2008) 169-71 for this *topos*, which was a standard part of epic from Homer onwards. However, just because it is a commonplace does not mean it is drained of significance, as words such as *discordia* clearly mirror the conflict in the human realm.

lightning in the actual storm. Even as nature is approaching self-destruction—which would put an end to Caesar's quest—its individual components are locked in conflict with each other, resulting in their own loss of strength, which thus paradoxically helps to preserve Caesar:[65]

> *discordia ponti*
> *succurrit miseris, fluctusque evertere puppem*
> *non valet in fluctum: victum latus unda repellens*
> *erigit, atque omni surgit ratis ardua vento.* (5.646-49)
>
> The dissension of the sea aided those who were suffering, and wave against wave has not the strength to overturn the ship: the surge drives back and rights its vanquished side, and the ship rises high from every wind.

It is important that Lucan prefaces this final verdict on the ineffectiveness of the storm with a description of human loss of control: *artis opem vicere metus, nescitque magister / quam frangat, cui cedat aquae* ("fears overcame the resource of their skill, and the skipper is ignorant of which of the waters he should break and of which to yield to," 5.645-46). Amyclas' human, scientific version of dealing with nature has also lost. Instead, Caesar's confidence that the wind and sea would exhaust themselves in trying to do damage to the vessel proves correct (even if his belief in his own superhuman *onus* as contributing to this result remains in doubt). As Matthews notes, Caesar's more intuitive view of nature wins out over Amyclas' scientifically based understanding.[66] Accordingly, Caesar repeats in his final defiant speech to the heavens, "*quantusne*

[65] Matthews (2008) 220 puts the matter nicely when she says that Lucan is "exploring the logical result of the familiar epic storm *topos* of all winds blowing at once." This is because it contributes perfectly to the continuing conception of nature as being ultimately helpless before Caesar, even when, as here, the odds are most greatly stacked against him.

[66] Matthews (2008) 151.

evertere" *dixit* / "*me superis labor est…*" ("he said, 'what labor is it for the gods to overturn me…'" 5.654-55): *labor* here recalls *labor* at 5.585.

Thus, this last speech is, in terms of the overall structure, somewhat deceptive: even though Caesar at last admits the possibility of his death, the actual climax of the storm has already passed, which is why immediately after his speech the tenth wave carries him to safety and concludes the scene.[67] He can thus be rhetorically lavish in proclaiming his own fearlessness: *intrepidus quamcumque datis mihi, numina, mortem / accipiam* ("whatever death you grant me, gods, I will accept without fear," 5.658-59). The sentiment of the lion in the Book 1 simile is still there, but ironically he will not have to test it. Yet the speech does contain important themes that will be reflected in the coming books, especially 8 and 10. First of all, Caesar complains that while he has attained the height of political power as dictator, he might still die as a *privatus* (5.668). I would like to argue for a different rendering of *privatus* than the usual sense of "lacking royal power."[68] Instead, the sense of lacking his army as well as of being disguised as a plebeian seem to me stronger here (both suggested by the *Comm. Bern.*), especially because earlier in the same book his soldiers had threatened to turn him into a *privatus* (5.365-66), i.e. by abandoning him. What Caesar is afraid of most of all, what would break the formula, is death in obscurity. Both the bolt and the lion crash spectacularly into their (apparent) demise. On the other hand, it would be the greatest disgrace for Caesar to die at this moment when he is so completely at the mercy of the elements, and to slip into the abyss without so much as a reminder of his existence. Thus *privatus* almost has its original sense as past participle of *privo*, "deprived" of recognition of

[67] Morford (1996) 44.

[68] As Matthews (2008) 244 prefers, citing Bentley, Housman, and others.

himself as Caesar the formulaic force (together with his army in battle), but only Caesar the *naufragus*. As we saw at the end of the previous chapter, this is nearly the same situation that Caesar faces at the end of the epic: even though he is accompanied by some of his men there, he is still faced with a similarly dishonorable and unspectacular death.

Therefore, the conclusion to his speech should be interpreted as a defiant rhetorical turn against the horror of having no tomb:

> *"mihi funere nullo*
> *est opus, o superi: lacerum retinete cadaver*
> *fluctibus in mediis, desint mihi busta rogusque,*
> *dum metuar semper terraque expecter ab omni."* (5.668-71)
>
> "O gods, I require no funeral: preserve this mangled corpse in the waves' midst; let me lack tomb and pyre, as long as I shall be dreaded always and awaited from every corner of the world."

Feeney notes that Caesar's sentiment here serves as a contrast to what happens at the end of Book 8 when Pompey's body nearly drifts out to sea: Cordus' retrieval of the corpse thus proves the greatness of Pompey as opposed to his father-in-law's egotism.[69] However, he seems to misrepresent the situation, since (as will be seen) the narrator's eulogy is precisely about downplaying the shame of the actual burial and grave of Pompey and imagining his *umbra* as free and unfettered. Thus, the narrator will do for Pompey what Caesar is doing for himself here. Caesar is trying to salvage some good out of a possible ignoble death on the high seas by positing that he will thereby become all the mightier through *fama*. In formulaic terms, he is treating his death as merely an extended period of dormancy before his "return." Caesar's threat of the power of negative *fama* if he should die (negative in the sense that it creates fear) would conflict

[69] Feeney (1986) 241-42.

with the narrator's extolling of a positive *fama* for Pompey after his death. Almost as if in dread of this occurrence, nature rescues Caesar immediately after his speech (5.672ff).

Thus ends the storm scene, which will prove to be the last example of aquatic resistance against Caesar in the physical realm. Even though Caesar does not entirely win because of his failure to reach Brundisium, nature also loses. When his army complains to him upon his safe arrival, they speak of the gods' weariness: *quid numina lassas?* ("why do you tire out the deities?" 5.695). Lucan likewise takes pains to point out that the sea is out of energy: *fessumque tumentes / composuit pelagus ventis patientibus undas* ("and the weary sea settled its swollen waves with the allowance of the winds," 5.701-02) and *lassatum fluctibus aequor* ("the ocean tired by waves," 5.703). Nature has been definitively exhausted by this most spectacular of its own assaults against Caesar: if not actually reduced to entropy as in an actual ἐκπύρωσις or κατακλυσμός, it no longer has the energy to put up large-scale resistance. Instead, as we saw in Chapter 2, it is Caesar who resumes the flooding paradigm and uses it to achieve final victory at Pharsalus.

5. The Nile

We have seen, then, how each successive encounter of Caesar with an opposing body of water has resulted in water's defeat, or in the case of the storm, a stalemate. Yet the central paradox is that, in each of the previous cases when Caesar was dealing with a watery threat that could have easily extinguished him, he emerged unscathed; however, Caesar is frustrated in his last confrontation with a body of water, which takes place purely in words. First, some background on Lucan's treatment of the Nile is needed.

The Nile excursus takes up a relatively large chunk of Book 10 (137 lines out a total of 546, or almost exactly one-quarter of the entire book); because of this any serious consideration of this book must take the episode into account.[70] Like previous rivers that Caesar has encountered, the Nile possesses the capacity for swelling, energy collection, and breakthrough. Yet, as we will see, it is more truly formulaic than its lesser cousins because of its annual cycle of flooding and retreat. Unlike, for example, the river at Corfinium, which would have flooded only because of Domitius, and the Rubicon, which simply could not produce the required volume of water no matter the assistance from other sources, the Nile is the only river in the epic that possesses a force as "cosmic" as Caesar himself. Finally, unlike the storms in Books 4 and 5, its overflow is obviously not so overwhelming as to threaten the integrity of the universe. Instead, as Acoreus will say, its water is actually beneficial and life-giving to the land it serves.

What makes the Nile even more formidable is its source or *caput*. I contend that this *caput* is comparable to the Caesarian core, since it provides the Nile with its water and thus its strength, just as the earth was the source of energy for Antaeus. In particular, just like the earth, the Nile's source is hidden, so famously in fact that every would-be conqueror has wished to discover its location. This is of course a jealously guarded secret by the Egyptians, and so Acoreus in a sense is the embodiment of the Nile's *caput*. As we have seen, Caesar is keen on seizing the inner sancta of all opposition he comes into contact with, from Rome's treasury to the hoard of wealth in Pompey's camp at Pharsalus. It is no surprise that he would think of doing the same for the Nile. For as we

[70] The Nile digression has only recently been the subject of sustained interpretation: see Tracy (2009), Barrenechea (2010) and Glauthier (2011). Earlier brief remarks (besides the commentaries by Berti and Holmes) include Romm (1992) 152-56, Walde (2007) *passim*, and Williams (2008) 231. Barrenechea's interpretation of the episode—that Caesar's query is an act of aggression that is foiled by Acoreus—is the basis of my own.

have seen, formulaic entities can perpetually return if they suffer only surface damage; if however their cores are "gutted" (or in the case of Antaeus, severed), then there is no chance of revival. Thus, if Caesar knew the secret of the Nile's source, he would have accomplished what even Alexander the Great could not, and would then possess Egypt in a symbolic sense. Furthermore, the significance of the Nile's source is that it effectively replaces Pompey's own *caput,* which in a sense has already been possessed by the Egyptians: Caesar needs a *caput* he can fully call his own. Finally, the Nile's source can also be viewed as a transformation of Pompeian hiding. This motif, which will be examined in the next chapter, signifies defeat at the hands of Caesar throughout the majority of the epic, but like Pompey himself, it is transfigured into a successful tactic against Caesarian aggression, whether physical or mental.

Caesar's Attitude toward Acoreus: The Indirect Approach

Before examining the excursus itself, it is necessary to turn to Caesar's query first, since it reveals his true intentions that are hidden beneath the conciliatory language. As we saw in the previous chapter, in Book 10 Caesar is uniquely vulnerable both because of his formulaic status as coming down from the explosion of *furor* at Pharsalus as well as due to being separated from his army. He must thus take an attitude of careful observation, not confrontation. However, Caesar's curiosity is actually a mental sublimation of his aggressive nature. This is shown by his the closing statement of his address to Acoreus: *spes sit mihi certa videndi / Niliacos fontes, bellum civile relinquam* ("if there be sure hope for me of seeing the Nile's source, I will abandon civil war," 10.191-92). In other words, before his intellectual curiosity is satisfied, he is still at war;

thirst for knowledge and desire to conquer merge seamlessly from protasis to apodosis.[71] He does so by transfiguring his signal quality *virtus* onto this higher level: *cum tanta meo vivat sub pectore virtus, / tantus amor veri* ("since such power lives in my breast, such love of truth," 10.188-89). Yet it is still a desire to conquer and possess, only redirected from the physical to the mental plane.[72] Moreover, in the section immediately preceding his enquiry, Lucan describes Caesar's secret desire for the wealth of Egypt (10.169-71). It would thus be no great leap for Caesar to transfer this thirst for the physical wealth of Egypt onto its cultural and intellectual riches, chief of which is the source of the Nile. If Caesar were to pry this knowledge from Acoreus, he would be the first conqueror in a long line to have succeeded; thus this question is not a simple case of disinterested knowledge for its own sake, but a sort of equivalent to military conquest.

Let us now examine the introductory section containing Caesar's query. His behavior toward Acoreus is uncharacteristically polite (*placidis compellat Acorea dictis*, "he addresses Acoreus with peaceful words," 10.175),[73] though this may also be the result of a long banquet and drinking session (*postquam epulis Bacchoque modum lassata voluptas / imposuit*, "after exhausted pleasure placed a limit on wine and feasting," 10.172-73).[74] Herein lies the paradox of this section: when seen in context with the

[71] App. *BC* 2.154 briefly notes Caesar's interest in Egyptian wisdom; otherwise neither he, Suetonius, nor Plutarch mention a figure such as Acoreus.

[72] Barrenechea (2010) 265; Ahl (1976) 228 also points out the combative subtext of Caesar's rejection of Eudoxus' calendar at 10.187.

[73] Tracy (2009) 246 connects *placidis* with the description of Acoreus at 8.476 as *placidus*, but to my mind this shows Caesar's skill at dissimulation rather than true affinity; recall his superficial friendliness at Rome (3.72-73). Besides, Acoreus will prove to be even better at hiding his true intentions than Caesar; for both figures, *placidus* is more an index of their mutual craftiness than a sign of their true disposition.

[74] Tracy (2009) 270ff rightly points out that the impious nature of the banquet itself sets the tone for Caesar's enquiry as less than disinterested; even the Nile is nothing more than a part of the feast (its waters drunk by the guests at 10.159-60).

remainder of Book 10, the Nile episode occurs when Caesar has just been physically satisfied, yet his request to Acoreus indicates that his mental hunger is still unsatisfied. Caesar's physical weakness is at one with the false peace represented by the banquet (10.332), which surely contributes to his being unprepared for the plot against him. Lucan also provides a telling detail of Caesar's decline: *longis Caesar producere noctem / inchoat alloquiis* ("Caesar commences to draw out the night in lengthy conversation," 10.173-74).[75] For a man who has been repeatedly shown to detest *mora*, he is now deliberately creating it in the Nile excursus, and thus inadvertently contributing to his danger by giving the plotters more opportunity.[76] In the overall context, it can only be concluded that his aggression, by being transferred to intellectual matters, is misplaced.

Caesar starts by making a list of scientific and anthropological knowledge about Egypt he would like Acoreus to tell him, concluding with his main objective: *noscique volentes / prode deos* ("and reveal the gods, who wish to be known," 10.180-81). Now *nosci volentes* is somewhat slippery on Caesar's part, but Acoreus, as we will see, is much too crafty to fall for such open coaxing.[77] At the same time, *deos* is also a prelude to Caesar's main request for the Nile. As Acoreus will explain, the Nile is itself viewed as a sort of deity that nourishes and preserves the Egyptian nation. On the other hand, as shown by Caesar's assault on the Massilian grove in Book 3, he is an eager destroyer of old gods. Thus we may conclude that gaining knowledge of the Egyptian gods and the Nile would give him a sort of control over them. Caesar's failure to do so would thus

[75] Tracy (2009) 245 notes the oddity of Caesar's willingness to communicate here rather than his usual habit of haranguing, but as will be shown, this apparent affability conceals aggressive intent.

[76] Barrenechea (2010) 262; see also Vögler (1968) 245-46 and Berti (2000) 250.

[77] Barrenechea (2010) 272 appropriately quotes the *Supplementum adnotationum* that *a me* can be understood after *nosci*, thus showing Caesar's subtle rhetorical positioning of himself as uniquely qualified to receive the secret of the Nile's source.

group him with Appius and Sextus as figures who foolishly try to pry out divine secrets. In Lucan's world, Caesarian aggression may work in the physical realm, but it is of little use in the intellectual realm; Cato will show that the answer lies elsewhere.

While Caesar's desire to learn the Nile's source is a sort of aggression (and Acoreus will interpret it as such), he must at the same time put on as innocent an appearance on it as possible. Accordingly, he describes himself as *quis dignior umquam / hoc fuit auditu mundique capacior hospes?* ("Which guest was ever worthier of this hearing or more capable of understanding the universe?" 10.182-83).[78] *Capacior* is a loaded term: in addition to the specifically intellectual sense (*OLD* 4), I suggest that the literal sense—"capable of holding/able to contain" (*OLD* 2)—is also operative here.[79] The adjective is also connected to *capere* in the sense of "contain," a rendering we have seen in this chapter (and will see again after Pompey's death). In other words, Caesar positions himself as a sort of container for the knowledge of the Nile's hidden source; given that the Nile is a river, he is playing on both the literal and figurative senses of *capacior*. A literal rendering of *capacior* is supported by another spatial verb in close proximity: *media inter proelia semper / stellarum caelique plagis superisque vacavi* ("in the midst of battles I always had room for celestial matters, the regions of star and sky," 10.185-86). Again, the figurative sense of time is the proper translation, but the physical connotation of space also lurks beneath the surface. Such a passive stance amounts to a

[78] Barrenechea (2010) 271 takes *hoc* with *auditu* and not with *Platona* in the previous line, thus emphasizing Caesar's superiority above all listeners for receiving this wisdom.

[79] Tracy (2009) 282-83 also sees the physical connotation operating here, but more directly in the sense of imperial conquest: Caesar thinks he is large enough to encompass the world. Just as he has successfully spread over the entire world, he claims that he can contain the all the knowledge of the world as well, thus equating physical and mental domination. Interestingly, Pliny also describes Caesar with *capax*: *nec* [*nunc commemoro*] *sublimitatem omnium capacem quae caelo continentur* ("nor [do I now relate] his loftiness that embraced everything contained in heaven," *NH* 7.91).

role reversal for Caesar, since in the early books it was he who was filling the physical and political space (as at Rome in Book 3).[80]

Yet in light of Acoreus' speech, especially its final lines, perhaps this is not as reactive a stance as it may seem. For if Caesar sees himself as a recipient of knowledge, he is at the same time also a conqueror with a thirst comparable to that which Alexander the Great also possessed for the Nile (10.40).[81] As Acoreus will show, the Nile is Caesarian in that it is energized by the presence of its own banks, which thus cause its overflow and flooding. Caesar's positioning is thus simply an intensification of his cautiousness around the ruins of Troy: instead of merely going around the object, he now wants to encompass it all at once. In addition, what Caesar is doing is also similar to how Hercules was finally able to dispatch Antaeus. In order to take down a formulaic opponent for good, one cannot meet its strength with equal and opposite strength, but must instead use a stratagem. As will be seen, however, it seems that Acoreus recognizes Caesar's trap, for not only will he not reveal the secret of the Nile's source for Caesar to contain, but he will also unleash such a flooding at the end of his speech that Caesar cannot possibly envelop it.

This Caesarian aspect will be dealt with below, but it is also important to note the hidden nature of the Nile's source. Here is where the formulaic core merges with Pompeian themes. As has been observed, Pompey's *caput* becomes a motif after his

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[80] Barrenechea (2010) 263 notes the appearance of *vaco* at 10.334; these dual occurrences thus frame the episode as one of delay.

[81] As Barrenechea (2010) 266-67 rightly points out, though he argues for *capacior* as linked to *capio* in the sense of "conquer" or "dominate." For the Nile's connection with Roman imperialism in general, see Romm (1992) 151.

decapitation, transferrable to other heads.[82] The Nile's *caput* can thus be seen as a replacement or perhaps "continuation" of Pompey's.[83] The connection between the two *capita* and thus the activation of *caput* as a motif is another manifestation of Caesar's transference of aggression from the physical to the mental plane. Yet unlike Pompey's *caput*, which is mortal and exposed, Caesar fully recognizes the notorious elusiveness of the Nile's:

> *...nihil est quod noscere malim*
> *quam fluvii causas per saecula tanta latentis*
> *ignotumque caput*. (10.189-91)
>
> …there is nothing I would rather know than the reasons for the river's seclusion through so many generations, and its unknown source.

Lateo is an important word that will come to the fore in the next chapter, and whose significance Lucan transforms here. As we will see, it usually applies to the marginality of Caesar's opponents, who are driven to the edges of physical, rhetorical, and political space due to Caesar's overwhelming sense of flooding: it is the result of Pompeian *fuga*. Yet after Pharsalus, hiding gradually sheds this negative and shameful quality, and finds itself fully transformed here. The Nile's *caput* has remained unknown for so long precisely because it is so well hidden, whether because of its location deep in Africa or, as Acoreus will show, because the bearer of its secrets is so elusive and winding with his rhetoric.

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[82] Fantham (1992b) 110 links Medusa's head in Book 9 with Pompey's, as does Malamud (2003) 32; see especially Dinter's (2005) 301-04 discussion of *capita* in the poem.

[83] A view advanced by Dinter (2005) 303. Pliny interestingly associates the Nile with Pompey's death: *maximum incrementum ad hoc aevi fuit cubitorum XVIII Claudio principe, minimum V Pharsalico bello, veluti necem Magni prodigio quodam flumine adversante* ("the greatest increase to this date was 27 feet when Claudius was emperor, and the smallest 7.5 feet during the Pharsalian war, as if the river were resisting Pompey's murder by some omen," *NH* 5.58).

Acoreus' Character Sketch

Acoreus, on the other hand, receives much briefer mention, but his appearance in Book 8 deserves comment. When the Egyptian royal council convenes to decide on a course of action concerning Pompey's imminent arrival, Lucan describes him as *iam placidus senio fractisque modestior annis* ("now peaceful in old age and milder in his weakened years," 8.476), a designation which is, at least on the surface, a calm and even pleasing alternative to the savage Pothinus.[84] In particular, this description seems to recall Lucan's sketch of Pompey in Book 1: *alter vergentibus annis / in senium longoque togae tranquillior usu* ("the one with years leaning toward old age and more serene with long practice of the toga," 1.129-30).[85] Not only does the Nile's *caput* in a sense replace that of Pompey, but the "mouthpiece" through which Caesar will also come to know the Nile himself bears traces of the dead Roman.[86] In addition, the priest argues the merits of receiving Pompey: *meritumque fidemque / sacraque defuncti iactavit pignora patris* ("he proposed his worth and loyalty and the sacred pedges of his deceased father," 8.480-

[84] Schmidt (1986) 37ff. makes the interesting suggestion that Acoreus may in part be modeled on Seneca himself, given both the description of the Egyptian as a kindly old man as well as the acknowledged influence of *NQ* 4a on the Nile excursus. However, he is mistaken in suggesting that Lucan thus opposes philosophical writing and its attendant *otium* and *securitas* (in the form of Acoreus-Seneca) to his own political engagement. If anything, the purpose of Acoreus' speech is precisely to oppose Caesarian aggression. It is all the more striking that Schmidt misses this point, when he himself notes on p.36 a connection between Lucan's Alexander digression and Seneca's disparaging remarks in the proem to *NQ* 3 on the so-called *Alexander-Historiker*, thus showing that a latent political opposition is already present in Seneca, which Lucan only heightens by giving a Senecan figure a speech that uses erudition in the service of direct opposition to one who would follow in the footsteps of Alexander.

[85] Mayer (1981) 142 notes this connection, though he does not draw any conclusion about the resulting similarity between Pompey and Acoreus.

[86] Barrenechea (2010) 264 notes that Caesar at 10.184-85 links Pompey's *fama* to that of the Egyptian priests as the reason for his arrival in Egypt. Tracy (2009) 192-203 points out in detail the many correspondences between Pompey and Egypt.

81).[87] However, he is overruled by Pothinus' appeal to *Realpolitik* in his advocating Pompey's murder; by granting him a substantial rebuttal (8.484-535) instead of the mere paraphrase allotted to Acoreus, Lucan heavily slants the response to Pompey's arrival in favor of Pothinus' plan of assassination.[88] Acoreus' possession of Pompeian traits thus suits him to be the repository of the Nile's Pompeian *caput*, but unlike the Roman he is far craftier and knows how to deploy the Caesarian side of the Nile just as well.

Acoreus' Speech Part 1: Nile as Counterbalance

Having established the seeds of opposition between Caesar and Acoreus even before they meet, we can now turn to how the priest deploys such resistance in his speech. He begins with a five-line proem:

> *"Fas mihi magnorum, Caesar, secreta parentum*
> *edere ad hoc aevi populis ignota profanis.*
> *sit pietas aliis miracula tanta silere;*
> *ast ego caelicolis gratum reor ire per omnis*
> *hoc opus et sacras populis notescere leges.* (10.194-98)
>
> "It is permitted to me to reveal the secrets of my great forbears, which are till now unknown to the uninitiated nations. Let others think it pious to be silent about such marvels; I, however, deem it pleasing to the gods for this work to be transmitted to all and for the sacred laws to become known to the nations.

[87] Barrenechea (2010) 274 rightly points out the negative qualities of Acoreus' character, such his inclusion among the *monstra* of the court (8.475-76). However, he also acknowledges the ambiguity of Lucan's portrayal: Acoreus' positive attributes include his use of *fides* and *pignus* in his argument, putting him at odds with the rest of the advisors and thus by default closer to the republican side, even if his sincerity is not beyond doubt.

[88] Tracy (2009) 188-89 points out that by assigning the argument for Pompey's assassination to Pothinus instead of the Greek Theodotus (as recorded by Plutarch and Appian), Lucan presents the debate as a sort of civil war within Egyptian society.

Critics have remarked on the didactic nature of Acoreus' speech, specifically the influence of Iopas in the *Aeneid*.[89] However, this is no mere disinterested recitation of scientific knowledge, but a reply to a question by the most aggressive man in Rome (and, at this point, in the world). If he is to fare better than Amcylas did in a battle of wits against Caesar, his basic stance must be one of resistance. Yet, like Caesar, Acoreus clothes his opposition in pleasing words. In fact, they are so pleasing that they are practically ambiguous. In light of the actual content of his speech, what exactly does Acoreus mean by *secreta* and *miracula*? If *secreta* means the source of the Nile, then the priest is of course lying, as will be seen. In addition, his usage of *pietas* to describe a disclosure of sacred knowledge to the masses is certainly absurd; Acoreus thus already subtly signals that his speech will not proceed as advertised.[90] In this sense, Caesar is very much like an Appius or Sextus Pompey in his failure to gain hidden sacred knowledge.[91] However, Acoreus' proem proves valid in another sense. Even though most of his speech consists of various theories whose truthfulness he rejects and a final "tour" of the Nile from its murky origins to Memphis, the lack of new information disclosed does not diminish the sheer impact of the priest's rhetoric. This is where *miracula* acquires a deeper undertone: Acoreus is forcing Caesar simply to marvel at the Nile's cosmic power instead of imparting any new knowledge about it. In fact, Acoreus

[89] See e.g. Zwierlein (1974) 61-64, Berti (2000) 161, Schrijvers (2005) 30. Glauthier (2011) 181-82 also notes similarities to Ovid's Pythagoras in *Met.* 15.

[90] Glauthier (2011) 188-89. Barrenechea's (2010) 275-76 argument that Acoreus fulfills part of Caesar's request due to the opening astronomical survey at 10.199-218 is not entirely convincing; his connection of this passage to Caesar's *noscique volentes / prode deos* at 10.180-81 seems to me unfounded, since *deos* in the context of 10.179-80 clearly refers to the usual Egyptian deities, not the Nile. In addition, Caesar's opening questions are separated from his closing query about the Nile at 10.189-91. Finally, *nosci* is pointedly refuted by Acoreus' emphasis on *mirari* at 10.298; the priest thus echoes Caesar's *prode* with a *prodam* of his own at 10.285 that is severely qualified as to the extent of information he reveals.

[91] As noted by Barrenechea (2010) 269-70.

reinforces the literal sense of *miracula* when he later declares at the beginning of the final section that nature prefers the Nile to be marveled at (*mirari*, 10.298) rather than known (*nosse*, 10.298). Such awe will be bolstered by 10.197-98: in light of the speech, especially its final lines, *ire per omnis hoc opus* will mean not that the knowledge of the Nile will be disseminated throughout the world, but that the Nile itself, through his mouth, will flow through the entire world.[92] Just as Caesar cloaks his aggressive nature in seemingly disinterested inquiry, Acoreus' dissemination of the Nile's characteristics will actually be a demonstration of its formulaic energy and *ira* in verbal form.

Acoreus opens the digression proper with a survey of the planets and their specific roles in regulating the earth's climate and other natural phenomena. The last planet to be covered is Mercury, under whose influence the Nile begins to flow:

> *…immensae Cyllenius arbiter undae est.*
> *hunc ubi pars caeli tenuit, qua mixta Leonis*
> *sidera sunt Cancro, rapidos qua Sirius ignes*
> *exerit et varii mutator circulus anni*
> *Aegoceron Cancrumque tenet, cui subdita Nili*
> *ora latent, quae cum dominus percussit aquarum*
> *igne superiecto, tunc Nilus fonte soluto,*
> *exit ut Oceanus lunaribus incrementis,*
> *iussus adest, auctusque suos non ante coartat*
> *quam nox aestivas a sole receperit horas*. (10.209-18)
>
> …the one born from Cyllene is the ruler of the vast waves. When he is held in that part of heaven where Leo's stars mingle with Cancer, where Sirius reveals his fierce flames and the circle that changes the shifting year contains Capricorn and Cancer, under which the Nile's openings are hidden—when the master of waters hurls his fire over them and strikes, then the Nile releases his source and is present on command, just as Ocean emerges by increase of the moon, and does not constrain its growth before night regains the summer hours from the sun.

[92] See Barrenechea (2010) 279 for Acoreus as a mouthpiece for divinity.

In effect, Acoreus opens the digression with a mini-summary of the Nile before actually launching into the various theories of its origin and behavior in detail. Even in this introductory section, the role of the Nile in opposing the element of fire is clear.[93] When the flames of Sirius grow too strong, the Nile (under Mercury's command) then releases its waters to offset the heat.[94] In addition, *auctusque suos non ante coartat* gives a glimpse of the Nile's massive flooding in the concluding section, though here its swelling is tempered by the evening hours; Acoreus knows how to modulate his own rhetorical flood, giving Caesar only a taste of his verbal powers for now. Finally, *iussus adest* indicates that the Nile is part of a larger cosmic scheme;[95] this phrase foreshadows later remarks by the priest. Thus, the main aspects of the Nile's behavior are already present *in nuce* in the introduction; indeed, Acoreus' subsequent expansion is mirrored in the crescendo of the Nile itself.

The first theory that Acoreus treats is in fact a dismissal of the claim that the Nile's waters receive aid from melting snows.[96] This section is significant, first of all, because it sets apart the Nile from the very first river in the text, the Rubicon, which Lucan described as being fuller than usual at the time of Caesar's crossing due to melting mountain snow (1.217-19). This point of contrast serves as a sort of negative ring-

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[93] Tracy (2009) 353-54 perceptively notes the importance of Mars in Acoreus' catalogue of the heavens: this planet presides over lightning, that *Ur*-Caesarian phenomenon: *habet ventos incertaque fulmina Mavors* ("Mars keeps the winds and random lightning," 10.206). He also points out that Acoreus actually shifts all of Mercury's destructive effects onto Mars, thus strengthening the connection between the Nile and Mercury.

[94] Sirius is surely symbolic of Caesar here: recall that Lucan labeled Alexander a *sidus iniquum / gentibus* (10.35-36): this phrase derives ultimately from *Il.* 22.25-31, in which Achilles is compared to Sirius. In addition, Cleopatra calls Caesar an *aequum / sidus* (10.89-90), which is clearly a reference to 10.35-36. She thus completes the chain that links Sirius to Caesar.

[95] Berti (2000) 187.

[96] All of Acoreus' theories derive from Greek sources, as summarized by Glauthier (2011) 196; most of them are found at Seneca *NQ* 4a.2.

composition, signaling to the reader that the Nile is hardly a normal river. It should also be noted that the denial of external aid refers specifically to the Nile's overflow (*quod crescat in arva*, "that it increases onto the fields," 10.219). In other words, the Nile is self-sufficient in its most Caesarian aspect (and hence the most threatening to Caesar himself), needing no other source except that which it has, which highlights the exclusivity of this *caput*.

Acoreus continues to distinguish the Nile by repeating and elaborating the point that it does not rise until the "dog days" of summer: *Nilus neque suscitat undas / ante Canis radios* ("nor does the Nile stir up its waves before the rays of the Dog-Star," 10.225-26), unlike other rivers which are aided by the melting snows of spring. The *Canis* is, of course, Sirius: the priest is already running a variation on one of his introductory themes.

This leads him to an expansion on *iussus adest*: *inde etiam leges aliarum nescit aquarum* ("hence it does not even know the laws of other waters," 10.228). *Leges* is an interesting choice of words, since it implies that the Nile does not behave according to the usual laws of nature that apply to other rivers, but also suggests an analogy in the political or social sphere—the Nile as autocrat, free to behave in its own peculiar manner. In this regard it is helpful to recall Lucan's description of Caesar at the banquet where the digression is taking place: *discubuere illic reges maiorque potestas / Caesar* ("there the kings and Caesar (a greater power) reclined," 10.136-37). By putting the river on a higher plane, Acoreus is showing Caesar that it occupies a similar place in the world of rivers that Caesar now does in the human sphere, and thus is a match for Caesar in a way

that previous rivers could not be. Fittingly, in his next breath Acoreus states that the Nile's specific task is to counteract the effects of the sun:

> *…nec tumet hibernus, cum longe sole remoto*
> *officiis caret unda suis: dare iussus iniquo*
> *temperiem caelo mediis aestatibus exit*
> *sub torrente plaga, neu terras dissipet ignis*
> *Nilus adest mundo contraque incensa Leonis*
> *ora tumet Cancroque suam torrente Syenen*
> *imploratus adest, nec campos liberat undis*
> *donec in autumnum declinet Phoebus et umbras*
> *extendat Meroe. quis causas reddere possit?*
> *sic iussit natura parens discurrere Nilum,*
> *sic opus est mundo.* (10.229-39)
>
> …nor does it swell in the winter, when its waters lack their duties because the sun is far distant: commanded to lend moderation to the unjust heavens, it emerges in the middle of summer under the blazing zone; and lest fire destroy the earth, the Nile is present for the world's sake and swells against the scorching mouth of Leo and when Cancer burns its own Syene it is present from invocation, nor does it free the plains from water until Phoebus sinks towards autumn and Meroe lengthens the shadows. Who could offer an explanation? Thus nature our parent ordered the Nile to flow about, thus the world needs it.

First of all, this passage again shows subtle rhetorical development: Acoreus reveals what was only implicit in his earlier reference to the Nile appearing in the time of Sirius. It comes fully into its role as the sun's adversary, much as the Po was against Phaethon, and thus as an enemy of "Caesarian" destruction.[97] Its specific role is to preserve the land of Egypt (*neu terras dissipet ignis*): thus, it differs from the Po in that the Nile performs its duties not during catastrophe but as part of the natural order of things. In addition, the appearance of *officiis* suggests that the Nile's role as preserver of natural balance has a strongly politico-moral role as part of a well-ordered universe. Given that such language

[97] For the Nile as opposition to (Caesarian) fire, see Tracy (2009) 348-49, 352-54 and Glauthier (2011) 184, who also sees at 184 n.110 a parallel with the Stoic theory that ἐκπύρωσις is followed by an aquatic domination that enables regeneration.

is reminiscent of Senecan descriptions of nature,[98] Acoreus may be seen to offer Caesar something akin to a Stoic vision of natural harmony as mirror of political harmony. Not that Lucan is being doctrinaire here: the Egyptian polity is in schism, with a civil war set to break out soon after this episode. Yet what the priest does offer is a detailed picture of beneficial flooding instead of Caesar's destructive flooding: unlike the dictator, who occupies physical and mental space never to relinquish it again, the Nile only does so until the power of the sun wanes, after which it recedes. The Nile is in eternal conflict with heat, but it is a fundamentally different sort of struggle from civil war, since neither element can ever truly conquer the other. They are thus the closest thing that comes to a *par* in Lucan's poem. This periodic cycle also puts it above the deluges in Books 4 and 5, which threaten to destroy the very universe they are supposed to protect. Even though the Nile does not actually challenge Caesar, Acoreus presents a picture of cosmic harmony that no mortal, no matter how powerful, can hope to disrupt. Thus, details such as *iussus* (again), *Nilus adest mundo*, *imploratus adest*, and *sic opus est mundo* solidify the divinity of the river and its untouchability. Indeed, the Nile preserves and nourishes not only Egypt, but also the entire world.[99] In this light, the issue of the Nile's *caput* is almost beside the point: even if Caesar does discover its location somehow, he still cannot have any effect on the Nile's operation. The rest is mere elaboration to what has already been established: *contraque incensa Leonis / ora tumet* should be symbolically

[98] Berti (2000) 193.

[99] A point made by Tracy (2009) 349.

clear by now if we recall the Caesarian lion simile of Book 1 and the Rubicon's description as *tumidus*.[100]

Now that Acoreus has firmly established the purpose of the Nile as protector and preserver of Egypt in opposition to Caesarian destructive power, he slowly begins to expound on the Caesarian nature with which it carries out this task:

> *Zephyros quoque vana vetustas*
> *his ascripsit aquis…*
> *…vel quod aquas totiens rumpentis litora Nili*
> *adsiduo feriunt coguntque resistere fluctu;*
> *ille mora cursus adversique obice ponti*
> *aestuat in campos*. (10.239-40, 244-47)
>
> Lying antiquity also attributed the Zephyrs to these waters…or because they strike the waters of the Nile, bursting its shores so often, and force it to halt with constant surge; because of delay to its course and the barrier of the opposing sea, it seethes on to the plains.

Even within the context of a discredited theory, Acoreus still describes a thoroughly formulaic Nile. The presence of a barrier (*mora*) in the Zephyr and the ocean causes it to build up energy (*aestuat*), which eventually leads to overflow *in campos*. Interestingly, the ocean was also a factor in inducing aquatic overflow for the stormclouds that created the Book 4 flood. The Nile is thus closer to such a titanic phenomenon than more ordinary rivers such as the Rubicon or the Aternus: the increase of its power is entirely within its own control and is unaided either by melting snow or human assistance. However, it never truly overreaches like the flood or overwhelms the land it is tasked to protect.

In the next theory, Acoreus again brings up the conflict between the Nile and the sun: *cum Phoebus pressit Meroen tellusque perusta / illuc duxit aquas* ("when Phoebus

[100] Berti (2000) 194 sees a personification of Leo and the Nile as antagonists and part of a larger struggle between the elemental forces of fire and water.

looms over Meroe and the parched earth draws water there," 10.251-52). The phrasing of this explanation strengthens the cause-and-effect relationship: the parched earth automatically calls forth water as a counterbalance. Interestingly, Acoreus does not reject this theory outright, simply noting its existence (*sunt qui…putent*, "there are those who think," 10.247-48). This may add to the significance of his mentioning the Ganges and the Po in connection with the Nile:[101]

> *trahitur Gangesque Padusque*
> *per tacitum mundi: tunc omnia flumina Nilus*
> *uno fonte vomens non uno gurgite perfert*. (10.252-54)
>
> The Ganges and Po are led through a silent part of the world: then the Nile, spewing all rivers from one source, does not convey them with one flow.

The Ganges and the Po seem to be incorporated into the Nile's course and ultimately into its flooding (cf. *omnia flumina*).[102] Why these two rivers in particular, though? The reason for this is that they all share a unity of purpose. Recall that the Po was able to quench the flames of Phaethon's sun-chariot, while the Ganges is singled out in Pompey's catalogue at 3.230-32 not only as the sole river in the entire world that flows east and thus faces the sun directly, but also as responsible for the historical feat of halting Alexander's hitherto unstoppable path of conquest (as discussed in the next chapter). It is surely no coincidence that these rivers are mentioned in connection with the Nile: all three are singled out as able to resist the sun's destructive heat. Given Caesar's symbolic association with the sun and his spiritual kinship to Alexander, by mentioning the Ganges and the Po alongside the Nile, Acoreus is thus incorporating them

[101] Berti (2000) 201 suggests that Lucan is conflating his likely model, Diogenes of Apollonia at Sen. *NQ* 4a.2.28-29, with Plato's underground rivers in *Phaedo* 111d.

[102] Berti (2000) 201.

into his plan for the Nile to obstruct Caesar, and their physical unity is thus a natural outcome of their shared symbolic function.

The final theory to be treated by Acoreus before his own is rather unusual in that Lucan does not seem to have derived it from any human source; instead, it bears a general similarity to Stoic theories of the sun drawing nourishment from the ocean:[103]

> *nec non Oceano pasci Phoebumque polosque*
> *credimus: hunc, calidi tetigit cum bracchia Cancri,*
> *sol rapit, atque undae plus quam quod digerat aer*
> *tollitur; hoc noctes referunt Niloque profundunt.* (10.258-61)
>
> We also believe that Phoebus and the heavens feed on Ocean: the sun seizes it when it has touched the arms of burning Cancer, and lifts up more water than the air can digest; the evenings return it and pour it onto the Nile.

Only one thing need be said about this theory, namely that it serves as a striking metapoetic commentary on the encounter between Caesar and Acoreus as a whole: Caesar's request, his thirst to "drink" up the Nile's waters (remember his self-designation *capacior*), is mirrored in the sun's need to drink up the Ocean's water. Yet the natural process that Acoreus describes again differs from Caesar's intellectual thirst: the sun takes up more water than it can absorb, and so returns some to the Nile at night. Again, there is a balance here: the sun never keeps taking, but always gives something up, unlike Caesar, who as we have seen absorbs the essence of everything he touches (such as Rome's treasury).

Finally, we come to Acoreus' own theory, which however fails to satisfy Caesar's query.[104] Instead of naming a definite location for the source of the Nile, he only

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[103] Berti (2000) 207.

[104] Romm (1992) 154 underscores the banality of this revelation by noting that it is "little more than a rehash of Eudoxan theory."

mentions the existence of underground water (*quasdam, Caesar, aquas…concussis terrarum erumpere venis*, 10.263-64). What is significant, however, is a reinforcement of his earlier hints of the Nile as part of an orderly universe:

> …*quasdam* [*aquas*] *compage sub ipsa*
> *cum toto coepisse reor, quas ille creator*
> *atque opifex rerum certo sub iure coercet.* (10.265-67)
>
> …I suppose that certain [waters] under the very structure of the universe began with the whole, which the creator and demiurge constrains with fixed law.

Compage is especially important here in the light of its appearance elsewhere. In other passages, Lucan only describes the shattering of a *compages*, whether in the similes of ἐκπύρωσις (1.72-80) or of the shipwreck when Caesar arrives at Rome (1.498-503).[105] In stark contrast, here is an intact *compages* of which the Nile is an important part; it is a structure that neither civil war nor Caesar has any chance of affecting, let alone overturning. The last relative clause emphasizes Acoreus' secure confidence in this divine order.

This passage should be read in contrast to the narrator's despairing outburst on the cause of civil war at the beginning of Book 2. He puts forth a theory of civil war which posits it as ordained by the creator: *sive parens rerum…fixit in aeternum causas, qua cuncta coercet / se quoque lege tenens* ("whether the maker…fixed causes for eternity, holding himself as well to the law by which he binds all," 2.7-10). Natural law decrees for the Roman an endless repetition of slaughter and misery, but for Acoreus, a similarly eternal ebb and flow of the Nile. The priest seems to suggest that Egypt is serene in its isolation from the outside world, that it cannot be touched by external strife. Even

[105] The connection between *compages* here and to Lucan's use of the word elsewhere is noted by Glauthier (2011) 182.

Caesar's curiosity cannot disrupt its harmony: the *compages* remains intact even against Caesar's "mental war." Of course, the second half of Book 10 will soon put an end to this peace, but the confidence of a world in balance that Acoreus puts forth as his final word to Caesar is striking nonetheless.

Acoreus' Speech Part 2: Peroration and Overflow

Having disposed of Caesar's query in a statement that amounts to a mere footnote next to all the discarded theories that he has put forth so far, Acoreus now moves on to the second half of the excursus.[106] Structurally speaking, the aforementioned cluster of theories served to parry Caesar's query; the remainder will now constitute Acoreus' rhetorical counterattack. As such, the digression on past conquerors and their attempts at searching out the source suggests that Caesar belongs in the came category: *quae tibi noscendi Nilum, Romane, cupido est, / et Phariis Persisque fuit Macetumque tyrannis* ("the desire you possess for knowing the Nile, Roman, was also shared by the Pharian, Persian, and Macedonian tyrants," 10.268-69). As if directly answering Caesar's comment at 10.190-91 about the Nile's hidden source, Acoreus confirms this fact for him: *sed vincit adhuc natura latendi* ("but its natural power of hiding is still victorious," 10.271). Since the priest has concluded explicating his theories, *adhuc* means that the secret will still hold after he finishes speaking.[107] The last core that Caesar faces in the epic will remain safe from his grasp, hidden within Acoreus (if he himself even knows).

[106] Glauthier (2011) 197 remarks on the increasing brevity with which Acoreus expounds each successive theory.

[107] Barrenechea (2010) 280 sees this statement as a general triumph of nature and/or the divine.

In one of Lucan's favorite paradoxes, Acoreus now turns the hidden nature of the Nile into its total opposite:

> *non fabula mendax*
> *ausa loqui de fonte tuo est. ubicumque videris,*
> *quaereris, et nulli contingit gloria genti*
> *ut Nilo sit laeta suo*. (10.282-85)
>
> No lying tale has dared to speak about your source. Wherever you are seen, you are sought, and no race has the glory of being blessed with its own Nile.

Ubicumque videris / quaereris encapsulates the paradox that the Nile's source is hidden so well that it could be anywhere (or even everywhere).[108] In other words, even though it sustains Egyptian civilization, no nation can truly be said to possess it (none can call the Nile *suus*); this holds true for both Caesar and his interlocutor. If we take Acoreus at his word here, he is saying that the Nile's *caput* has no fixed location, but is on a path of infinite regression, since it always recedes from the view of the most recent observer (this observation itself carries metapoetic resonance, since we can never be sure of the truth of Acoreus' statements as he leads us on one winding description after another). The idea of a perpetually receding *caput* is also another aspect of the *fuga* dynamic that was so ignominiously associated with Pompey in the opening books: as we will see in the next chapter, the narrator is invested in redeeming Pompeian traits after his defeat at Pharsalus. Whereas *fuga* ultimately proved unsuccessful for Pompey, it finally baffles Caesar when carried out by his "successor" *caput*. In addition, this is where the Caesarian core meshes with Pompeian *fuga*: the origin of the Nile's aquatic power thus

[108] Berti (2000) 224 makes the clever observation that the usual order of *videre* and *quaerere* is reversed here: whereas normally visual confirmation is the end of querying, here the sight of the Nile only *begins* a process of investigation that has no end.

proves impossible for Caesar to root out, unlike the Roman treasury or the Pompeian treasure hoard at Pharsalus.

In addition, the connection with Pompey is strengthened because the other main instance of this paradox of "hidden ubiquity" occurs at the end of Book 8; as we will see in the next chapter, it is in fact the narrator's chief means of warding off the disgrace of Pompey's makeshift grave. In both cases, physical absence does not imply oblivion, but instead the possibility of omnipresence does, which is in its own way a counter to Caesar's all-pervading physical presence. The continuation of this non-physical omnipresence depends, of course, on the continuing function of an anti-Caesarian voice; this is much more evident for Pompey's *umbra*, of course, but Acoreus also plays this role, though indirectly.

Having elaborated on the immunity and ineffability of the Nile's source, Acoreus now begins the final section: *tua flumina prodam, / qua deus undarum celator, Nile, tuarum / te mihi nosse dedit* ("I will reveal your rivers, Nile, as far as God, who conceals your waters, has granted me to know you," 10.285-87). This statement is deceptive: even after conceptualizing the Nile's *caput* as perpetually receding, he still toys with Caesar's expectations before dashing them again below. Such ebb and flow reflects Acoreus' coming description of the Nile's alternating mildness and fury. Thus, *tua flumina prodam* will mean something different from what Caesar and the reader expect: instead of dodging and weaving around various theories, he will rhetorically launch the Nile's floodwaters at Caesar, overwhelming his mental receptivity (recall *capacior*) once and

for all. Apostrophizing the Nile contributes to the sense that Acoreus is trying to achieve a sort of mystical union.[109]

Accordingly, the entire closing section is a visual "tour" of the Nile all the way to its conclusion at the delta. Acoreus again begins with a reiteration of the eternal contest of the Nile against the forces of heat: *ausus in ardentem ripas attollere Cancrum* ("daring to elevate your banks against burning Cancer," 10.288).[110] And when the Nile comes into full view, Acoreus repeats the sense of 10.283-84: *teque vident primi, quaerunt tamen hi quoque, Seres* ("and the Seres first see you, yet they also seek you," 10.292). He then makes his most explicit statement yet about the mystery of the Nile's source:

> *arcanum natura caput non prodidit ulli,*
> *nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre*
> *amovitque sinus et gentes maluit ortus*
> *mirari quam nosse tuos.* (10.295-98)
>
> Nature has not revealed your hidden source to anyone, Nile, nor has it allowed the peoples to see you when little, and it has removed your interior and preferred the nations to marvel at your origins rather than to know them.

Acoreus is following his now familiar pattern of repetition with amplification: *arcanum* is the strongest adjective yet applied to the Nile's source, giving it a status commensurate with oracles and the divine.[111] Lucan thus confirms the connection of this scene with earlier oracular scenes in the epic: Caesar fails in his desire just as did Appius and Sextus.

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[109] Berti (2000) 223 notes the religious and mystical tone of this peroration, and also points out a similar attitude by Lucan (or the narrator) himself at 1.417-19. This would lend support to seeing Acoreus as a sort of substitute for the poet, enabling him to get his "revenge" on Caesar after Pharsalus; cf. the famous apostrophe to Caesar at 9.980-86.

[110] Berti (2000) 226. In addition, *Libycis nunc aequus harenis* ("now benevolent to the Libyan sands," 10.291) suggests a connection with Cato's journey in Book 9. But instead of just trying to struggle against the barren wastes, the Nile can actually transform them.

[111] Lucan also uses the adjective to describe both Cato's *pectus* (2.285) as well as the oracle of Ammon (9.554), thus placing the Nile in their category as similar mysterious cores.

Yet Acoreus also for the first time offers an alternative: instead of knowing in the intellectual sense (*nosse*), he proposes marvel and amazement (*mirari*).[112] The priest has moved beyond the didactic mode, to which he at least gave lip service at the beginning of his excursus, toward a frankly hymnic conceptualization of the Nile.[113] Yet *mirari* is also ironic here, for it is precisely the mental viewing of the Nile's source that Acoreus denies Caesar. This is because Caesarian viewing is directed toward its victims: Sulla's blank gaze upon the dead from his battles and proscriptions (2.207-08) and Caesar's eager observation of the dead at Pharsalus (7.787ff) are the most prominent examples. Instead, Acoreus is forcing Caesar to marvel at something beyond his capacity to view and thus beyond his ability to possess. The wonder of the Nile's formulaic cycle is on display here, not any of its secrets: this is the true *miracula* he mentions at 10.196.

As Acoreus continues his description, he expands on the unviewable nature of the Nile: *hic quaeritur ortus, / illic finis aquae* ("here the origins of your water are sought, there its conclusion," 10.301-02). No one nation can see, and thus truly know, the Nile in its entirety. As the Nile approaches the torrid zone, it becomes more openly Caesarian:

> *inde plagas Phoebi damnum non passus aquarum*
> *praeveheris sterilesque diu metiris harenas,*
> *nunc omnes unum vires collectus in amnem,*
> *nunc vagus et spargens facilem tibi cedere ripam*. (10.307-10)
>
> From there you flow past Phoebus' zones, suffering no loss of water, and for awhile you traverse the barren sands—now gathering all your strength into one stream, now wandering and scattering the bank, which yields easily to you.

[112] Berti (2000) 230 speaks of "due modelli opposti di conoscenza e di approccio nei confronti della realtà."

[113] Glauthier (2011) 198 n.136 notes that Acoreus stops addressing Caesar in this final section, instead turning to apostrophizing the Nile.

Acoreus here explains the Nile's flexibility, its ability both to gather its strength (*collectus* is the original formulaic verb from the Book 1 bolt simile) and to disperse it. This alternation is not only strikingly similar to Caesarian behavior, but also recalls the alternation of celestial fire between compact and diffuse shapes at 1.531-32.

Immediately afterwards, the Nile again begins to coalesce: *rursus multifidas revocat piger alveus undas* ("again the sluggish channel recalls your much-divided waters," 10.311). Full formulaic behavior comes only at the cataracts, however: *ac nusquam vetitis ullas obsistere cautes / indignaris aquis* ("and you are insulted that any rocks block your waters which are nowhere forbidden," 10.319-20). Just like Caesar, the Nile bristles at anything that might obstruct its path. Indeed, Acoreus' coy rhetorical question at 10.315-17 (*quis te tam lene fluentem / moturum totas violenti gurgitis iras, / Nile, putet?* "who should think that you, Nile, flowing so gently, would stir up all the rage of your violent flood?") captures not just the flexible, fully formulaic nature of the Nile, but also sums the river up as, in a sense, the quintessence of riverine power in Lucan ever since the Rubicon dared to swell in protest to Caesar's crossing.[114] The Nile is the glorious and overpowering endpoint to that modest beginning, the fulfillment of a potential inherent in that inconspicuous stream.

At the same time, however, Acoreus sets up the unrestrained overflow of the final lines with the following detail: *spuma tunc astra lacessis* ("then you harass the stars with your foam," 10.320). This is certainly a hyperbolic statement, but it also gives the Nile a dangerous edge, as if Acoreus were trying to stretch its divinely ordained role as part of

[114] Tracy (2009) 364 makes the interesting suggestion that these lines look ahead to the outbreak of the conspiracy against Caesar.

the natural harmony.[115] Such a rhetorical move is unsettling, as if Acoreus is willing to stretch (if not overturn) the loftily benevolent image of the Nile that was firmly established at the beginning of the excursus.

As he approaches the end, the priest continues to strengthen the river's Caesarian characteristics: *et scopuli, placuit fluvii quos dicere venas, / quod manifesta novi primum dant signa tumoris* ("and the cliffs, which it pleases them to call the river's veins, because they are the first to show clear signs of new swelling," 10.325-26). Personifying the river is picturesque, but the metaphor of circulation also connects the Nile to the biological nature of Caesarian strength collection: Antaeus' recharging was also described as a blood transfusion (4.630-31). However, the Nile abruptly calms down again in an interlude before the final surge: *it…tacens iam moribus unda receptis* ("its water goes silently, its customary ways resumed," 10.329). This is because it encounters mountains barring it from Libya; the short digression reminds the reader that that region is forever cut off from the life-giving waters of the Nile.

As the Nile reaches the end of its path at Memphis, so too does Acoreus' speech reach its conclusion. It is a natural place for a climax, as the Nile expands to flow out of its seven mouths into the Mediterranean: *prima tibi campos permittit apertaque Memphis / rura* ***modum****que vetat* ***crescendi*** *ponere ripas* ("Memphis is the first to grant its fields and open countryside to you, and it prevents your banks from placing a limit to your growth," 10.330-31). This ending deserves careful analysis, because it is resonant with meaning on more than one level. First of all, the fact that Acoreus concludes with an

[115] Berti (2000) 241 notes that this image occurs most commonly in poetic storm scenes, which often in Latin epic have a touch of the cataclysmic about them. In addition, the image of the river disturbing the heavens is a reversal of the theory, earlier stated by Acoreus, that the heavenly bodies draw water up to the sky. Instead of being the passive *materia*, the water now takes the initiative.

image of limitless growth is striking: building on the ominous hint at 10.320, Acoreus in his final image of the Nile for Caesar and the reader now plays with the possibility of a deluge reminiscent of Book 4, which threatens to undermine the Nile's role as a preserver of balance.[116] Yet Caesar, as representative of the cosmic heat to which the Nile is opposed, is sitting right before him; thus, it is only natural for Acoreus (using the Nile) to counter him with everything in his (and its) power. The "victory" of Acoreus and the Nile (owing to the absence of a reply for Caesar) is commensurate with the reduced strength of Caesar at this juncture of the epic: while he was active, only actual deluges bordering on universal destruction were enough to stop him. Now that he competes only intellectually, the mere suggestion of a flood is enough.

Second, the image of a Nile growing without limit is the final confirmation that it operates in the same way as Caesar. Recall that Caesar's model for spreading and taking over territory in the early books was precisely aquatic, as he expanded to flood the Italian countryside. Acoreus thus shows the dependency of this model on this original, physical example, but does him one better because the Nile's flooding is salubrious, unlike Caesar's destructive possession of space.

Finally, Acoreus' victory has implications beyond the immediate context of this scene, for Lucan is actually alluding to Book 1 here: *laetis hunc numina rebus / **crescendi** posuere **modum*** ("the deities placed a limit to growth for prosperous affairs," 1.81-82).[117] The poet often laments that the cost of civil war is a halt to imperial expansion (beginning at 1.13ff). Civil war, while destroying the internal political and social boundaries of the

[116] The example of Stoic κατακλυσμός at Seneca *NQ* 3.27-30 may be pertinent here.

[117] Berti (2000) 248, who also suggests a reference to 10.172-73 as a possible ring-composition; if so, a thematic connection is not readily apparent.

Roman state, effectively places a limit on external growth. Through Acoreus, Lucan thus expands his audience not only to Caesar, but to Rome itself: unlike human institutions, whose unchecked growth threatens their own collapse, the Nile can apparently increase without limit. The fact that the Nile's growth exceeds Rome's also indicates that Caesarian resistance, after its failure in the mortal Pompey and its marginalization in Cato, can in the end only be found in the natural world.

For the idea of no *modus crescendi* is literally no end at all, as Acoreus turns the idea of Roman expansion upside down and throws it back at Caesar: you Romans thought you were going to spread over the *orbis terrarum*, but in the end only something as mighty and inexplicable as the Nile can have that kind of growth. The image of a perpetually increasing Nile is both sublime and unsettling, for it recalls the terrifying lesson of the flood and storm scenes of Books 4 and 5—namely, that only a general deluge can stop Caesar. The Nile does not go quite that far here, but Acoreus is still straining the very limits of its ability, so that the Nile's behavior here nearly overturns its image in the earlier theories as confined to a precise role. Perhaps it is a matter of matching Caesar's reduced circumstances: whereas it nearly took the actual drowning of the world in order to stop Caesar in the earlier books, his rhetorical aggression here can be silenced by rhetorical inundation alone. In the end, Acoreus fulfills his promise that this *opus*, both the Nile and his speech, will pass *per omnis*.

And so instead of leading Caesar backwards along the Nile to its source, Acoreus frustrates his expectations by a verbal *imitatio* of the Nile's mighty course as it traces its waters from nebulous and diffuse sources and gathers them into a single, focused and unstoppable flow. Although Caesar never admits defeat, there is no doubt that he is

diminished: not only does he offer no reply to this 140-line speech, but Lucan also immediately transitions to the incipient stages of the conspiracy against him that will ultimately lead to mortal danger in the final lines of the epic.[118] After overcoming multiple rivers and surviving even catastrophic storms and floods, Caesar is finally humbled by the Nile. In the context of Book 10, the Nile episode is thus a tipping point after which Caesar finds himself increasingly under strain.[119] Yet it is important to remember that the successful resistance is only verbal. This restricted nature of Caesarian resistance will now come to the fore in the final two chapters of the epic: we shall see how Lucan uses the concept of overflow in establishing Pompeian preeminence, but only in a non-physical realm. Likewise, Cato's victory (his march across Libya is at best only a stalemate) will come from acknowledging the limitless flooding of the Stoic Jupiter.

[118] In contrast, Tracy (2009) 362ff sees Acoreus' speech as a failure, since it does not dissuade Caesar from civil war in favor of a true recognition of a harmonious universe in which the Nile plays its role. This is perhaps reading too much into the passage, since simply by virtue of not revealing the secret of the Nile's source, Acoreus has defied Caesar.

[119] Barrenechea (2010) 281 raises an interesting point about 10.192: if Caesar had actually discovered the secret of the Nile's source, he would have abandoned civil war, and thus the poem would have stopped. Therefore it is a foregone conclusion that Acoreus would not reveal this to him, and thus the Nile digression can be seen as a mental prelude to the physical continuation of civil war in the second half of Book 10.

Chapter 5. Pompey

The preceding four chapters have laid out the opposition between Caesarian force and its aquatic counterpart. Even though neither party overwhelms the other directly, the Nile digression can be read as the first clear sign of the escalating hostility toward Caesar at Alexandria, and it thus ultimately contributes to Caesar's profound crisis of existence at the end of the epic. Despite this mutual hostility, we have seen how Lucan grafts the riverine model of overflow and flooding on to the original Caesarian formula in order to conceptualize his unstoppable and permanent pervading of his environment. In the remaining two chapters, we will examine how Caesar's human antagonists respond to the formula and, in the process, how they try to borrow aspects of it.

Pompey is by far the more straightforward of the two leaders of the republican opposition in terms of his relationship with the formula. However, he is also the most human of the three protagonists, in that he has the most multifaceted personality, instead of the single-minded, almost fanatical concentration of Caesar and Cato on their respective missions.[1] Thus motifs extraneous to the formula also affect his character. The most prominent of these is the motif of hiding, which affects all Caesarian opposition in the first three books. This is related to Pompey's favored mode of behavior, that of *fuga*.[2] For a time, escape proves sufficient; after all, Caesar did point out in Book 3 that

[1] Ahl (1976) 159 notes that this complexity makes him "one of the finest character studies in Roman literature."

[2] I take *fuga* to be his main characteristic rather than *mora*, as Masters (1992) 9 does, because of my focus on the formula. In other words, *fuga* is a natural consequence of overflow and flooding because it calls to mind a clear sense of space.

the absence of an opponent will cause his energy to dwindle.[3] Yet, of course, it cannot return Pompey to a position of strength, only buy him time; instead, he begins to see it as the prelude to formulaic regeneration followed by a triumphant return to Rome. The means by which he hopes to effect his self-revival lies in aid from his eastern allies, which Lucan symbolically links with rivers.

In the meantime, however, he is also pulled in the opposite direction by Cornelia, who acts as a sort of dead weight, diverting his attention from his plans for regeneration. Hidden on the island of Lesbos, she quickly becomes associated with obscurity and the hiding motif, which is deadly for Pompey's temporal hopes. Though Pompey manages to gain the upper hand in Book 6, in which Lucan openly associates him with formulaic and aquatic power, he loses control of his men at Pharsalus and succumbs to their *furor*. Yet his defeat there will soon prove beneficial, for his behavior and pretensions in Book 8 show that a resurgent Pompey would actually have fulfilled the rhetorical aspersions that Caesar casts at Pompey in Book 1 by becoming another Sulla, albeit one wholly reliant on barbarian forces.[4] At the same time, Pompey cannot go quietly into civilian life with Cornelia, but chooses at his moment of death to cast his lot with *fama*. His death also allows him to be subsumed into the riverine model, but only as an *umbra*, so that it carries no taint of autocracy that it would have had if he had remain alive.[5]

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[3] Seneca provides a fitting image here: *pauca adhuc adiciam ad enarrandam vim fulminis, quae non omnem materiam eodem modo vexat. valentiora, quia resistunt, vehementius dissipat, cedentia nonnumquam sine iniuria transit* ("I will also add a few things in describing the force of lightning, which does not disturb every substance in the same manner. For it shatters stronger objects because they resist, while sometimes it passes through pliant objects without harming them," *NQ* 2.52.1).

[4] Leigh (1997) 145-48 discusses Pompey's dangerously ambiguous stance vis-à-vis the republican cause.

[5] The narrator's voice is the key to Pompey's reevaluation; Bartsch (1997) 78ff well argues that throughout the epic, Pompey's decisions are constantly rationalized by the narrator.

1. Pompey's Character Sketch as Template

We first meet Pompey in Lucan's extended introduction to Book 1, where he gives biographical sketches of the two protagonists. Like that of Caesar, the segment on Pompey is divided into two sections: the first is a description of his characteristics, which are then elaborated in a simile. However, unlike for Caesar, what is more of interest here is the character sketch rather than the simile:

> *Nec coiere pares. alter vergentibus annis*
> *in senium longoque togae tranquillior usu*
> *dedidicit iam pace ducem, famaeque petitor*
> *multa dare in vulgus, totus popularibus auris*
> *impelli plausuque sui gaudere theatri,*
> *nec reparare novas vires, multumque priori*
> *credere fortunae. stat magni nominis umbra…* (1.129-35)
>
> Nor did they meet as equals. One of them, his years leaning toward old age and more peaceful from long practice of the toga, forgot in peace how to be leader, and as a seeker of fame granted much to the crowd, entirely driven by popular winds and rejoicing in applause at his own theater; nor did he replenish new strength, and entrusted much to his former fortune. He stands, the shadow of a great name…

This is a portrait of a man in decline. Lucan presents two reasons for this, the first of which is Pompey's advanced age.[6] However, more immediately relevant to our discussion is the second—that a long period of inactivity has also contributed to his present condition. Recall what Caesar said in his Book 3 simile about his own energy dissipating in the absence of an object on which to release it. This is also Pompey's situation: he has lost energy to the point where, in conjunction with his age, it is no longer possible for him to regenerate (*nec reparare novas vires*). Pompey's strength lay

[6] However, Pompey was only six years older than Caesar, so Lucan is exaggerating their differences in order to emphasize the former's loss of vigor, as Ahl (1976) 157 notes.

in the past when he was an *adulescentulus carnifex* (Val. Max. 6.2.8); since then, he has stagnated. Lucan describes the Pompeian oak as *nec iam validis radicibus haerens / pondere fixa suo est* ("clinging with roots no longer solid, it was kept in place by its own weight," 1.138-39). That is, it no longer has any underlying stability, but is still standing only because of its bulk.[7] What could the equivalent of *pondus* be for Pompey himself? It could only be his *fama* or reputation, based on his past victories and triumphs.[8] Likewise, just as his actual weakness is not visible on the surface, so observers cannot tell that the oak is weak because its roots, which are the true indication of its lack of strength, are hidden underground. And so *fama* may be at fault for contributing to Pompey's decline, but it is also the only thing, however shadowy and unsubstantial (*magni nominis umbra*), that is left to him. In the course of events, this reliance on the crowd will prove to be fatal, for Pompey's acquiescence to his army's wishes at Pharsalus will be his downfall; such behavior is also the opposite of Caesar's camp, in which general and army are united in a single will.

In addition, *ducem* not only stands for an abstract noun such as "generalship";[9] it can also be understood figuratively as Pompey forgetting his earlier self. In fact, the dichotomy between his private and public (i.e. military) selves will emerge as one of his main dilemmas in the course of the narrative. Pompey's closeness to Cornelia will prevent him from being his full self as a *dux* (unlike Caesar), and the end of Book 7 will

[7] Ahl (1976) 156 n.18 notes that the difference between the Pompeian oak and the oak to which Aeneas is compared at *Aen.* 4.441-49 is that the former is dead.

[8] *Pondus* (*OLD* 6a) has this figurative sense. Moreover, it also links Pompey to *in se magna ruunt* (1.81), which is Lucan's explanation for why the republic fails: both are top-heavy. More than that, though, we are encouraged to see Pompey as embodying the republic, a role which he does not manage successfully.

[9] Getty (1940) 46.

show that he will gladly throw away the responsibility of being a commander in order to return to the domestic sphere.[10]

After the Battle of Pharsalus, he is divested of his *fama* and *nomen*, which leaves him to rush back to Cornelia and into a private, purely domestic mode. However, this is only temporary, as Pompey's murder occasions a rebirth (or perhaps more properly a resurrection) of his reputation. Crucially, Lucan utilizes the formula to achieve this, as he envisions Pompey's *umbra* spreading throughout the world untrammelled and thus mounting a successful spiritual resistance to Caesar through the mechanism of his most persistent natural enemies. Thus, the connotations of *umbra* and *nomen* change from being associated with restriction, hiding, and backwardness (in the sense of Pompey's previous glory in life) to an entity that approaches the Nile in its potential for infinite growth and expansion—only spiritually and verbally instead of in the physical realm.[11] Similarly, Lucan shifts *fama* from its conventional sense as granted by a contemporary audience to a living Pompey (*plausuque sui gaudere theatri*), to the lone, silent eulogy given by the narrative voice of the poet's own time.[12] In other words, Pompey's death allows Lucan to grant him the *fama* for which true epic heroes strive, but of a singular

[10] Lucan's model here is Aeneas in his dilemma between private *otium* at Carthage and public duty; however, Pompey becomes an "inverse" Aeneas by choosing to abandon his troops and flee to Cornelia: see Rossi (2000) 572-73.

[11] Feeney (1986) 240 remarks on the transformation whereby Pompey finally lives up to his *nomen* at the end of his life.

[12] As shown by this simile and by his dream at the beginning of Book 7, Pompey's *fama* is closely associated with spectacle. Indeed, looking at him from the outside (instead of in his own mind), his being an object of viewing puts him at the opposite end of the Caesarian, who usually does the watching (Sulla at 2.207-08, Caesar the morning after Pharsalus). This is yet another sign that he is doomed to fail, since it is either the dead who are viewed in these cases or those who are in the process of being slaughtered.

kind.[13] Such greatness, though, can only be achieved at the cost of his life, and will adhere only to his disembodied name.

2. Pompey According to Caesar: A Composite Picture

Pompey is physically absent from Book 1, which is dominated by Caesar and his lightning advance down the Italian peninsula; he only appears in the speech Caesar makes to his troops before his march on Rome. In Caesar's mouth, Pompey becomes a contradiction. At first he dismisses him as a figure past his prime: he calls him *longa dux pace solutus* ("a leader weakened by long peace," 1.311), his forces *partesque in bella togatae* ("and his civilian partisans for battle," 1.312), and associates him with *nomina vana Catones* ("Catos, those empty names," 1.313). All three statements correspond to elements in Lucan's character sketch of Pompey above. Yet it is also in Caesar's interest to remind his audience of Pompey's crimes both past and present: he describes Pompey's vast network of client kings in the East as a *continuo…regno* ("unbroken despotism," 1.315), and he expounds on the dangerous intrusion of his legions into the forum on the day of Milo's trial in 52 BC (1.319-23).[14] In the process, however, Pompey begins to appear Caesarian. Indeed, the Milo episode foreshadows Caesar's own military intrusion into Rome in Book 3: *atque auso medias perrumpere milite leges* ("and when his soldiers dared to smash right through the laws," 1.322). Both the verb and the imagery are unmistakably Caesarian: Caesar depicts the laws as barriers that cannot withstand the force of Pompey's soldiers.

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[13] As Statius well understood: *Pompeio dabis altius sepulcrum* ("you will give Pompey a loftier tomb," *Silv.* 7.72). In a sense, Lucan's poem, especially the end of Book 8, is a tomb or monument for Pompey, as Gowing (2005) 87-88 observes.

[14] See Roche (2009) 252-53; cf. also App. *BC* 2.23-24 and Plut. *Pomp.* 54 for Pompey's tenure as sole consul.

Caesar continues to expand on this formulaic conception of Pompey. Not only has he behaved in this manner in the past, but he may very well do so again: *nunc quoque, ne lassum teneat privata senectus, / bella nefanda parat suetus civilibus armis* ("now also, lest an old age in private life keep him in exhaustion, he prepares criminal wars, accustomed to civil strife," 1.324-25). This is where Caesar truly parts company with the poet: he depicts Pompey as capable of regeneration from a condition of exhaustion (*lassum*) accompanied by old age. In other words, Pompey has now become capable of participating in the full Caesarian cycle: *lassus* does not indicate a permanent slide into irrelevance, but a state of dormancy which at any time can be roused back into aggression. In addition, Caesar also cynically associates Pompey with his mentor Sulla (1.326; this is done with emphasis, since *Sulla* and *Sullanus* appear at 1.330 and 1.335 as well), a bold move considering Sullan affinity with Caesar in the analepsis at the beginning of Book 2. To complete the Caesarian portrait, he compares Pompey's putative desire for civil war to the *furor* of tigers (1.326-29), thus granting Pompey his own predator simile just as Caesar has *his* lion simile.

This portrait does not quite cohere, however. It is difficult to reconcile a Pompey that is both effete and yet capable of *furor*, one who is both ruler of such a vast *regnum* yet is still hungry for one more *provincia* in Caesar (1.338). One facet or the other must give way. As Lucan has already shown (and as events will prove), Pompey will not be able to sustain regeneration for more than a short period of time. His trajectory leads relentlessly downward, from decline into oblivion and finally death.

3. The Hiding Motif of the Vanquished

Ariminum as Exemplar of Hiddenness

Although Pompey seemingly cannot become formulaic, he is not bereft of his own network of motifs. These can be seen when Caesar takes the town of Ariminum:

> *rupta quies populi, stratisque excita iuventus*
> *deripuit sacris affixa penatibus arma*
> *quae pax longa dabat: nuda iam crate fluentis*
> *invadunt clipeos curvataque cuspide pila*
> *et scabros nigrae morsu robiginis enses.*
> *ut notae fulsere aquilae Romanaque signa*
> *et celsus medio conspectus in agmine Caesar,*
> *deriguere metu, gelidos pavor occupat artus,*
> *et tacito mutos volvunt in pectore questus:*
> *"o male vicinis haec moenia condita Gallis,*
> *o tristi damnata loco! pax alta per omnes*
> *et tranquilla quies populos: nos praeda furentum*
> *primaque castra sumus. melius, Fortuna, dedisses*
> *orbe sub Eoo sedem gelidaque sub Arcto*
> *errantesque domos, Latii quam claustra tueri…"*
> *...gemitu sic quisque latenti,*
> *non ausus timuisse palam: vox nulla dolori*
> *credita, sed quantum, volucres cum bruma coercet,*
> *rura silent, mediusque tacet sine murmure pontus,*
> *tanta quies.* (1.239-53, 257-61)

> The people's tranquility was broken, and its youth, summoned from their beds, grabbed weapons hanging on the sacred household gods, of the sort that resulted from long peace: they seize rotting shields with their frame now bare and javelins with bent points and swords encrusted with the bite of black rust. When they noticed the gleaming eagles and Roman standards and saw Caesar high up in the midst of his troops, they stiffened with fear, dread seizes their cold joints, and they ponder muted complaints in their silent hearts: "O these unlucky walls, founded next to the Gauls, O condemned by this gloomy location! There was deep peace and serene quiet through all nations: *we* are a prize for madmen and their first encampment. It would have been better, Fortune, had you given us a place under the eastern sky and cold Arctus and wandering homes, rather than for us to guard the gates of Latium…" Thus each spoke with hidden groans, not daring to be afraid openly: they entrusted no voice to their

> grief, but there was such stillness was as when winter confines the birds, the countryside is silent, and the open sea is mute without a murmur.

The town bears striking similarities to Pompey: it also suffers the ill effects of *pax longa*, rendering it unable to resist Caesar's incursion. Note especially *fluentis* (*OLD* 5c here), which matches *solutus* (*OLD* 8c) at 1.311: long absence from war weakens Pompey, just as it physically decays the Ariminians' shields.[15] The former has not tried to stem this laxness by formulaic regeneration, while the latter are quite unable to be reconstituted. There is in fact no battle here, for Caesar has already occupied the town's forum before the townspeople are even awake (1.236-37). But because Ariminum is already occupied by Caesar, their silent speech is also a sign that they have fallen under the cloud of Caesar's domination: the *quies* and *pax* that characterized their peaceful slumber now elide seamlessly into the *quies* of subjugation at 1.261.[16] Peace is always sinister in Lucan, for as Nigidius Figulus, says, *cum domino pax ista venit* ("this peace will come with a master," 1.670). There is only energy while the *furor* of civil war and of Caesar are in operation: after Caesar's victory, all of Rome (and the world) will fall under a fatal calm, with no hope of regeneration—a linear trajectory, unlike the Caesarian cycle. The closing simile reinforces this formulaic conception of civil war, since it foreshadows the dead calm of the sea in Book 5, which is an example of a complete loss of energy by nature. Likewise, Ariminum is devoid of energy after Caesar's conquest, but it was never able to regain it in the first place.

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[15] Lucan may have been influenced by *Aen.* 2.509ff here, in which Aeneas describes the pathetic scene of Priam girding his useless weapons for battle. Given the intertextual relationship between Pompey and Priam—for which see Narducci (1973) 317-25, Feeney (1986) and Bowie (1990)—this would strengthen the connection between Ariminum and Pompey, since both are in the same situation in terms of energy. Evans (2008) 156 notes that Silius draws on Lucan's motif at *Pun.* 4.12-13, but turns the outcome positive in that, when Hannibal arrives, the Ariminians are easily able to clean off the rust from their weapons.

[16] As Anzinger (2007) 114 and Roche (2009) 223 point out.

In addition, the *quies* of Caesarian domination means actual silence: the people of Ariminum do not express their thoughts aloud, but in an epic innovation, Lucan reads their minds (*tacito mutos volvunt in pectore questus*).[17] In general, Caesar's victims are marked by silence; this becomes an important motif that pervades the epic.[18] As the citizens of Ariminum demonstrate, this is due to the oppressive atmosphere of Caesarian occupation. Under Caesar's incipient tyranny, only expressions that flatter the ruler are permitted; this is true just as much for the narrator (5.385-86) as for the Egyptian crowd at Alexandria (9.1106-08). All contrary or rebellious thoughts must be kept hidden (thus *gemitu…latenti*). Physical hiding will also become a motif of resistance to Caesar, inasmuch as it results from Pompeian *fuga*. It will be signaled with *lateo/latebra*; recall the remnants of the senate in Book 3 skulking in their *latebras* (3.105). Likewise, the would-be victims of Sulla's proscriptions also seek out *latebrae*: *nec populum latebrae cepere ferarum* ("nor did the lairs of beasts contain the people," 2.153). Such a habit of behavior can be seen as a useless counterpart to the Caesarian dormant phase: unlike the Caesarian lightning bolt, the republicans can gain no regeneration from their hiding.

This propensity for *fuga* and hiding also functions on a wider scale, as the logical result of having no ability to withstand the Caesarian onslaught means eventual withdrawal and scattering to the ends of the earth. Now Lucan is preoccupied with geographical extremity, beginning as early as 1.13ff when he fantasizes about Roman

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[17] McGuire (1997) 230-48 traces the adaptation of this motif in the Flavian epics; Roche (2009) 231 notes that silent complaint against tyrants is a *topos*, but the examples he cites do not include epic before Lucan.

[18] Roche (2009) 228. See Anzinger (2007) 112-23 on the silence of the masses in Lucan, including the episode at Ariminum. Schmitt (1995) 9ff notes that Lucan is the first to bring the voice of the crowd into epic.

expansion to the ends of the world that could have been achieved if not for civil war.[19] With the spreading of Caesar's influence over Rome and eventually the whole world, however, there is no choice for the republicans but to keep retreating. The citizens of Ariminum may only dream of *errantes domos* now, but such a wish will in fact prove to be prescient, as Pompey keeps moving eastwards until his death (not to mention his plan in Book 8 to go even farther by enlisting the aid of the Parthians), while Cato's soldiers will complain that their commander is leading them to the very edges of the earth itself. Such is the futility of resistance to Caesar, at least in the physical realm.

Rome's Reaction to Caesar

Caesar's arrival causes sheer panic in Rome: the people believe the wildest rumors about him and, unsure how to respond (1.490-91), abandon the city in complete disarray: *sic turba per urbem / praecipiti lymphata gradu…inconsulta ruit* ("thus the maddened crowd rushes heedlessly through the city with precipitous steps," 1.495-98). This is *furor*, but the opposite of the concentrated, predictable sort that powers Caesar. Instead, it only causes dissipation, and of a kind, as Lucan emphasizes with *ruit irrevocabile vulgus* ("the mob rushes on, unable to be held back," 1.509), which is linear and thus un-formulaic: there will be no regeneration for Rome. This he drives home by a despairing and critical outburst:

> *O facilis dare summa deos eademque tueri*
> *difficilis! urbem populis victisque frequentem*
> *gentibus et generis, coeat si turba, capacem*
> *humani facilem venturo Caesare praedam*
> *ignavae liquere manus*. (1.510-14)

[19] See Bexley (2009) and Pogorzelski (2011).

> O ye gods, who are ready to grant the highest honors and are unwilling to guard them! A city teeming with peoples and conquered nations and spacious enough for the human race, if the masses should gather, was abandoned by cowardly bands as easy prey when Caesar was imminent.

The narrator imagines that Rome can contain the entire population of the empire within its walls (the Roman people as *populis* and the subject nations as *victis…gentibus*). *Coeat* should have formulaic potential (in the precise sense of compression as seen in the last chapter), but even with a full Rome, there is no indication of aggression here, only a massed obstacle. We have seen that a solid obstacle only contributes to Caesar's own formulaic regeneration; it is thus questionable how valid such resistance would prove to be. Also, Pompey's character sketch and the accompanying simile show that, due to his decrepitude, defeat would have been a foregone conclusion anyway. Thus, this seemingly senseless abandonment of Rome will in the long run prove to be the only option that Pompey has.[20] The truth of this matter is proven by Pharsalus: the one occasion where he abandons his instincts and listens to his men, he is defeated; one could say that there he fulfills the image of himself as a *pondus* from his Book 1 oak simile and thus invites the Caesarian lightning strike.

The Remaining Romans: Concealment and Hope

After the Romans who stay behind become aware of the significance of the portents concluding Book 1, they fall into a state of numbness:

> *Ergo, ubi concipiunt quantis sit cladibus orbi*
> *constatura fides superum, ferale per urbem*
> *iustitium; latuit plebeio tectus amictu*
> *omnis honos, nullos comitata est purpura fasces.*

[20] App. *BC* 2.37 describes Pompey's withdrawal as a deliberate strategy; Plutarch does not mention this, but at *Pomp.* 63 he mentions that his retreat from Italy was generally considered a sound decision.

> *tum questus tenuere suos magnusque per omnis*
> *erravit sine voce dolor.* (2.16-21)
>
> Thus, when they realize what great calamities faith in the gods would cost the world, there was a deathly hiatus in the city; every high office hid, covered in plebeian clothing, and the rods of authority were accompanied by no purple. Then they restrained their complaints, and a huge nameless grief wandered through them all.

For the senators, hiding their status is due to declaring Caesar's arrival a state of emergency, though Lucan's interpretation of it as *ferale* also influences this change in garb.[21] However, their hiding also connects them to the citizens of Ariminum; yet they go beyond those actions not only in concealing their status and thus their identity as senators, but also in their complete lack of verbal response. And when they do complain, it will not be about the future, but the past, in a series of soliloquies that recall the Marian and Sullan civil wars.[22]

Lucan elaborates this surreal atmosphere with a simile that likens the atmosphere at Rome to a death in the family. At the end of this simile, Lucan describes the grieving mother's emotional state: *necdum est ille dolor nec iam metus: incubat amens* / *miraturque malum* ("yet neither is that grief, nor is it fear: she senselessly broods and marvels at the evil," 2.27-28). *Miratur* is noteworthy here because it reaches into the realm of spectacle, a well-established concern of Lucan's.[23] The space between recognition of the tragedy and the beginning of grief is occupied by a passive gazing that results from numbed stupor (*amens*). Lucan is developing the theme of silence as the

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[21] Fantham (1992a) 83.

[22] Leigh (1997) 299 puts it in nicely formulaic terms when says that "Books 1 and 2 of Lucan establish from the start that Roman history is…to be understood…as a cyclic pattern of experience culminating every generation in a burst of civil bloodshed."

[23] Especially by Leigh (1997).

epic proceeds: it now leads to the kind of disengaged viewing which Leigh argues is divorced from moral engagement on the side of republican resistance.[24] This implication is bolstered by a connection with the previous book, when the Romans conjure up wild fantasies of Caesar leading a barbarian army to sack the city: *iussamque feris a gentibus urbem / Romano spectante rapi* ("and that the city would be ordered to be sacked by wild nations as the Roman looks on," 1.483-84). Here the theme of viewing is of course explicit, as is the sheer power of Caesarian aggression, such that it not only silences its victims, but makes them helpless observers of their own destruction.[25] In this respect, such viewing stands in opposition to the complaint of the Ariminians' (even if silent).

Yet after they recover from the initial shock, the Romans begin to express themselves, in particular a *matrona* (2.28).[26] She concludes thus:

> *"nunc flere potestas*
> *dum pendet fortuna ducum: cum vicerit alter*
> *gaudendum est." his se stimulis dolor ipse lacessit.* (2.40-42)
>
> "Now you have the power to weep, while the leaders' fortunes are undecided: when one of them wins, there must be rejoicing." Her very grief urges itself on with these goads.

This woman confirms what was implied at Ariminum—that autocracy induces self-censorship and the suppression of all negative feelings about the coming regime. However, since Caesar has not yet arrived, she can at least voice her complaint aloud. In addition, the *matrona* is offering resistance in her own fashion: the action of *his…lacessit* is a heightening of emotion (cf. the Caesarian lion goading itself at 1.208). However

[24] Leigh (1997) 4-5.

[25] I differ here from Roche (2009) 306, who restricts the meaning of *Romano* to Caesar.

[26] Anzinger (2007) 115-16 suggests that the simile of the bereaved mother who cannot yet grieve aloud serves to foreshadow the open complaint of the *matrona*.

futile it may be, the woman is at least simulating the increase of Caesarian *furor* by a similar increasing of *dolor*.

The men of Rome similarly refuse to go quietly: they resume the theme of geographical extremity that Lucan introduced at 1.13, but turn it violently on itself: *date gentibus iras, / nunc urbes excite feras* ("give rage to the nations, now rouse the savage cities," 2.47-48). Instead of wishing for Roman outward expansion in order to stave off civil war, they now dream of the world storming the walls of Rome: *omnibus hostes / reddite nos populis: civile avertite bellum* ("render us enemies to all peoples: turn away civil war," 2.52-53). Such is their desperation that it is no great leap for them to suggest ἐκπύρωσις as a solution (2.56-58). Thus, their sentiment is linked to the persistent efforts of nature to destroy Caesar by effectively destroying itself, as we saw in the last chapter. This kind of emotional extremity of course invalidates their suggestions, but at the same time it also foreshadows Pompey's less destructive enlistment of foreign forces at the margins of the earth in order to beat off Caesar's encroaching forces.

Domitius' Dormant Hiding

For all this helplessness, Lucan does provide in Domitius an example of hiding that holds out some promise for future resistance, even if his own proves futile. After Caesar successfully besieges Corfinium, the garrison surrenders their commander. Caesar grants clemency even though Domitius desires to die (2.512-13). The latter is left to simmer in indignation:

> *premit ille gravis interritus iras,*
> *et secum "Romamne petes pacisque recessus*
> *degener? in medios belli non ire furores*
> *iam dudum moriture paras? Rue certus et omnis*

> *lucis rumpe moras et Caesaris effuge munus."* (2.521-25)
>
> Unafraid, he suppresses severe anger and says to himself, "Will you basely seek Rome and the retreats of peace? Do you not at this moment prepare to go into the midst of the madness of war, intending to die? Rush straight on and burst all the bonds of life and flee Caesar's gift."

Now Domitius does exhibit the hiding motif through remaining silent: just like the citizens of Ariminum, he keeps his complaint to himself (*secum*). He also differs from them, however, in that he is not worn out, but retains anger (*ira*) underneath his silent exterior. In this way, he is very much like the river that he has just tried to unleash: for both, a barrier kept their rage in check. Unlike the effete Ariminians or the powerless Romans, Domitius is very much capable of future action. Thus he also resists physical marginalization (*recessus*) at Rome, which we have seen has already been muffled by Caesarian domination. Instead, he will act formulaically; however, just as the Caesarian lion, he is both aware and unconcerned that such behavior amounts to suicide (*lucis rumpe moras*). As events turn out, this is exactly what happens: at Pharsalus, Domitius lies dying. There, Lucan even mirrors the short dialogue with Caesar which he has in Book 2. In fitting with the formulaic heart he possesses underneath his placid exterior, Domitius declares that he dies in peace: *liber ad umbras / et securus eo* ("I go to the shades free and serene," 7.612-13). The reason for Domitius' serenity is that, since the battle is not yet over, there is still a chance for Caesar to be defeated (7.610-15). This sort of blind optimism (*cum moriar, sperare licet*, "though I die, I can still hope," 7.615) is similar to the narrator's own refusal to look directly at the future at the beginning of Book 2 (*liceat sperare timenti*, "may he who is fearful still hope," 2.15). Of course, Domitius achieves a sense of calm that the narrator cannot match, but such unconcern is disturbingly similar to the Caesarian lion's own *securitas* at an incoming missile. In this

regard, Domitius' stubborn opposition and refusal to give way place him more with the iron will of Cato than with the weakened victims of Caesar we have seen so far.

4. Pompey's First Speech

Pompey first appears in the narrative only in the middle of Book 2; he does not figure at all in the escape from Rome. After a brief mention of the disposition of his forces at Campania (2.392-95), Lucan launches into a digression of the Apennines and the rivers that issue from them; we examined in the previous chapter the importance of the episode of Phaethon as symbolizing the Po's resistance to Caesarian fire. The close placement of both sections suggests a connection between Pompey and rivers that will continue throughout the epic. We may also note that Lucan describes Pompey as scattering his troops instead of concentrating them (*haec placuit belli sedes…hostis in occursum sparsas extendere partis*, "this location for war pleased him…that he scatter and spread his troops against the enemy's onslaught," 2.394-95). This will also be his general strategy at Dyrrhachium in Book 6; it is almost as if he senses the main weakness of the Caesarian formula, which is that (as Caesar mentions in Book 3) it needs a concentrated barrier or opponent. Here, Pompey is doing his best not to conform to Caesar's expectations, but instead to remain loose and flexible.

Yet for all the incipient connection between Pompey and rivers, it is Domitius at Corfinium who first puts one to real use against Caesar (as seen in the previous chapter). When Pompey finally appears, he does not inspire much confidence: the speech which he makes in order to rouse up his soldiers' anger (*temptandasque ratus moturi militis iras*, "and judging that he should test the anger of his soldiers, soon to mobilize," 2.529) fails

to achieve the desired effect (2.596-97). As has been noted, for much of the speech his real audience seems to be Caesar rather than his men (just as Caesar also spent much of his Book 1 speech addressing an imaginary Pompey).[27] His focus in the beginning of the speech is on delegitimizing Caesar as a proper opponent, instead grouping him with an invasion of Gallic hordes (2.535) or the likes of Catiline (2.540ff). In this way, Pompey rhetorically twists the civil war into nothing more than *patriae…vindicis iram* ("the rage of a vengeful fatherland," 2.540). Just as Caesar casts Pompey as an even worse Sulla, so Pompey now throws up Cinna and Marius as predecessors for Caesar (2.546). Yet Pompey crucially also shows his weakness by revealing his unease at these *exempla*: *quamquam, si qua fides, his te quoque iungere, Caesar, / invideo nostrasque manus quod Roma furenti / opposuit* ("although, believe me, I am loath to link you with these men, and the fact that Rome has opposed our hands to you in your madness," 2.550-52). Indeed, he even wishes that Crassus were alive so that he could be the one to dispatch Caesar as he did Spartacus (2.552-54). In contrast, Caesar showed no such compunction in his own speech. Whether this feeling is real or feigned, and whether it comes from genuine reluctance or disdain at how unworthy Caesar is as an opponent, the result is still the same—a momentary show of hesitation that contributes to the cool reception of the speech and will eventually grow into a fatal flaw.

Thus, Pompey's attempt to position himself as formulaic clearly fails: *fervidus haec iterum circa praecordia sanguis / incaluit* ("the fiery blood around this heart has grown warm again," 2.557-58).[28] Lucan is pointedly drawing a contrast to Laelius, who

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[27] Fantham (1992a) 181; see also Ormand (1994) 44-45.

[28] Fantham (1992a) 188 notes that Lucan inverts the Virgilian *frigus…circum praecordia sanguis* ("cold blood around the heart," *Geo.* 2.482, *Aen.* 10.452) and innovates by using it literally with *sanguis* instead of

also expressed his physical readiness in these terms (1.363-64). Pompey's self-description here is thematically significant. Just as the earth was constantly able to supply Antaeus with fresh (and hot) blood from her hidden depths, so Pompey claims that his own core, the heart, can still (*iterum*) circulate all over his body, and thus that he is able to regenerate his own strength. Just as he was described in his Book 1 character sketch, however, Pompey is here deluded by visions of his past. His belief in his own continuing vigor would actually prove Caesar's accusations of a return to Sullan behavior credible (1.324-32). Instead, Pompey really is what he claims Caesar says of him: *licet ille solutum / defectumque vocet* ("though he call me exhausted and enfeebled," 2.559-60). Pompey may deem himself merely dormant, but he is no longer able to return to the bloodthirstiness of his youth.

However, Pompey also has to maintain a delicate balance: he must present himself both as a vigorous war leader on par with Caesar, but at the same time emphasize the commanding heights he has already reached in the less recent past. Thus Pompey soon shifts his self-image from Caesarian to Caesar's obstacle: *non privata cupis, Romano quisquis in orbe / Pompeium transire paras* ("it is not private things you desire, whoever it is you are who prepares to surpass Pompey in the Roman sphere," 2.564-65).[29] While *transire* literally means "surpass" (*OLD* 11) here, the literal definition is also operative: Caesar is trying to "cross" Pompey (figured as the last barrier between him and supreme power), just as he successfully crossed the Rubicon and vanquished the river at Corfinium. In contrast to his pretensions of revival, this image of himself is right

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figuratively such as with *virtus* (6.240) or *ensis* (7.146). This shows that Lucan wishes to emphasize the physical underpinning of formulaic regeneration.

[29] Fantham's (1992a) 189 emendation of *orbe* for *urbe* also makes sense here because, as she says, it fits Pompey's global influence, which he himself declares at 2.583-84.

on the mark, especially at Pharsalus (as we saw) when Caesar slices through the Pompeian ranks with ease.

In addition to balancing Caesarian and oppositional perspectives, Pompey also attempts to reevaluate the concept of *fuga*. At 2.575, Pompey's *heu demens, non te fugiunt, me cuncta secuntur* ("alas, foolish one, they do not flee you, but follow me,") may on the one hand be a rhetorical trick which he uses in order to cover up the republicans' shameful retreat from Rome, but as suggested above, it is also the only method of preventing defeat by Caesar (which is not the same as gaining victory over him, of course). By turning the sense of *fuga* from escape *from* to escape *to*, it also raises the fundamental issue of what Pompey's destination might be. As ensuing events will show, Pompey will chiefly be concerned with dispatches to his eastern client kingdoms, hoping to use them as auxiliaries in a sort of formulaic awakening of their strength. This race to the margins will become more pronounced after Pharsalus as Pompey himself plans to cross over into Parthia—a plan, which, if accomplished, would have removed the negative implications of *fuga* by revealing it as the first stage in a quasi-formulaic process of centrifugal movement, which would then followed by a centripetal return to Rome as he is recharged with barbarian strength.

Pompey is already dreaming of such renewal as he reviews his military achievements:

> *omne fretum metuens pelagi pirata reliquit*
> *angustaque domum terrarum in sede poposcit.*
> *idem per Scythici profugum divortia ponti*
> *indomitum regem Romanaque fata morantem*
> *ad mortem Sulla felicior ire coegi.*
> *pars mundi mihi nulla vacat, sed tota tenetur*
> *terra meis, quocumque iacet sub sole, tropaeis*. (2.578-84)

> The pirates abandoned every channel of the sea in fear and requested a home in a narrow location of the earth. I, more blessed than Sulla, also forced the unconquered king to death, a fugitive through the parting of the Scythian sea and one who delays Roman destiny. No portion of the world is empty of me, but the entire earth, under whichever sun it lies, is occupied by my trophies.

First, the image of the pirates confining themselves to land is connected to the hiding motif by *angusta*.[30] Before Caesar had his own *provincia* to win glory, Pompey was already spreading his own influence across the Mediterranean and "filling" it by driving the pirates off the field, who are thus forced into a narrow corner of the world. As a result, he expands throughout the whole world, which is left available (*vacat*) for no one but himself. Note the formulaic image here: Pompey has already "overflowed" over the entire world, thus occupying it and leaving no room for anyone else; it is no wonder that Caesar sarcastically refers to himself as Pompey's *ultima…provincia* ("last province," 1.338). Pompey's *imperium* is truly one on which the sun never sets.[31] Yet the negative implication is that because he has already filled the world and thus broken through, he has also already peaked and is thus inevitably stagnant.

However, Lucan inserts a fatal double entendre right in the middle of Pompey's self-praise. After the pirates, Pompey's greatest claim to fame was to deliver the finishing blow against the wily king of Pontus, Mithridates, who had eluded various Roman commanders for several decades.[32] But Pompey uses language uncannily befitting himself as well. Like Mithridates, Pompey will soon be a *profugus* from Italy (2.608); likewise, he delays (*morantem*) the ultimate fate of Rome, which is to succumb

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[30] See Plut. *Pomp.* 28 for Pompey's resettlement of the pirates.

[31] Leigh (1997) 152 perceives a tension here between his senatorially-appointed role and his personal pretensions, especially in the repetition of first-person references.

[32] For an overview of Mithridates, see *CAH*^{2} IX, Ch. 5; for his conflicts with Rome, see McGing (1986).

to Caesar. Both are also hounded to death soon after their defeat. Finally, *regem* may seem excessive if applied to Pompey, but Caesar had accused his son-in-law in exactly the same terms at 1.315-16, and Pompey's unprecedented grants of *imperium* throughout the 60s BC led to contemporary fears about his power (a power which, like Mithridates', is also based in the east).[33] There is perhaps also a correspondence between *per Scythici…divortia ponti* and Pompey's plan to gain support from the Parthians in Book 8.

Thus, Pompey introduces the final section of his speech, which is a list of his achievements abroad (2.585-94), with language that unwittingly predicts his own downfall. This, perhaps more clearly than anything, shows the linear progression of Pompey's fame, and how he can only fall once he has reached the pinnacle of power. He may think that he has already occupied the geography of the known world with his *tropaea*, leaving only civil war for Caesar (2.595), but he does not seem to be aware at this point that the nature of Rome as an empire means that civil war and foreign war will be inextricably linked (even as he is quick to contemplate enlisting the aid of the Parthians in Book 8).

As noted above, the reaction to this speech is lackluster: the troops do not want to hear about Pompey's self-aggrandizement. This lack of rapport with his men does not bode well for his generalship; ironically, the roles will be reversed at Pharsalus, when it is his troops who drag Pompey into battle against his better judgment. Either way, the absence of a common bond between commander and army is yet another indication that he cannot truly become Caesarian. Of course, Caesar did not obtain a favorable response to his own speech in Book 1 either. However, the fact that the centurion Laelius was able

[33] See Plut. *Pomp.* 25 and 30 for such fears concerning Pompey. As for Mithridates, Glew (1977) 254 relates his attempts to model himself after Alexander the Great.

to rouse up the troops demonstrates the greater overall cohesion between Caesar and his subordinates in that there are enough who can serve as conduits for Caesar's formulaic desires. Despite Pompey's boasting about his own *sanguis*, then, one is left in serious doubt about his ability to revive himself. The closing lines are telling:

> *sensit et ipse metum Magnus, placuitque referri*
> *signa nec in tantae discrimina mittere pugnae*
> *iam victum fama non visi Caesaris agmen*. (2.598-600)
>
> Magnus himself also sensed their fear, and he decided to bring back the standards and not send a squadron overcome by the rumor of an unseen Caesar into the critical moment of such a great battle.

These complete a mini ring-composition with the first rumors of Caesar's arrival in Book 1. Just as Caesar's *fama* did the work of scaring the wits of the citizens of Rome, so Pompey's army falls prey to the same thing here, thus unequivocally branding him as vanquished.[34] In these opening books, *fama*, so prized by Pompey, is decidedly on his opponent's side, filling Italy far in advance of Caesar's physical presence. Control of space is fundamental to Lucan's conception of civil war; after Pompey loses the battle for physical supremacy at Pharsalus, he will have to find other ways and realms in which to expand.

5. Pompey's Bull Simile as Formulaic Fantasy

The simile that follows this shameful retreat continues the theme of Pompey's false regeneration:[35]

> *pulsus ut armentis primo certamine taurus*

[34] More so because, as Fantham (1992a) 196 observes, *referri signa* normally refers to retreat from a battlefield. There has been no actual battle here, but Caesar's *fama* has been mentally victorious.

[35] Leigh (1997) 148-149 observes that this simile makes Pompey less of a republican because epic is "not a democratic form"; an interesting suggestion, but far too broad without additional evidence from other epics.

> *silvarum secreta petit vacuosque per agros*
> *exul in adversis explorat cornua truncis*
> *nec redit in pastus nisi cum cervice recepta*
> *excussi placuere tori, mox reddita victor*
> *quoslibet in saltus comitantibus agmina tauris*
> *invito pastore trahit, sic viribus impar*
> *tradidit Hesperiam profugusque per Apula rura*
> *Brundisii tutas concessit Magnus in arces*. (2.601-09)
>
> Just as a bull, driven from the herd in the first struggle, seeks the forests' hidden places and, an exile through empty fields, tests his horns on opposing trunks and does not return to pasture except when, having regained his neck, the bulging muscles please him; soon a victor, he drags along the throng that has returned, with its accompanying bulls, into whichever glades it pleases him (though the shepherd be unwilling)—thus unequal in strength, Magnus surrendered Hesperia and, a fugitive through the Apulian countryside, withdrew into the safe citadel of Brundisium.

Like Caesar's bolt simile in Book 1, this simile also diverges from its subject, but more much more sharply. In the beginning, there is no problem: the bull, as Pompey, is chased off from his territory. However, the similarities soon end: Lucan's bull is able to regain his strength before returning as *victor*. This is striking, to say the least; so mismatched does this simile seem to Pompey's actual fate that Shackleton Bailey singles out lines 2.605-07 for special comment.[36]

The same principle that was at work in the Phaethon myth is operative here: anti-Caesarian forces can be victorious only on a plane removed from reality. Thus, we have another example of the poet's tendency to wish-fulfillment, and the reason for a

[36] Bailey (2009) 46. This simile draws on *Geo.* 3.220-336 and *Aen.* 2.601-09: see Fantham (1992a) 196. On p.197 she explains the incongruity by interpreting the simile as Pompey's own expectation of his return, a sentiment shared by Ormand (1994) 46. Such a takeover of the main poetic voice by that of a character seems to turn the situation on its head, in light of the narrator's consistent intrusion on behalf of Pompey. Yet this explanation does fit with Pompey's tendency to indulge in dreams and fantasies rather than face a disappointing reality (as in his dream before Pharsalus in Book 7). Easton (2011/12) 213-18 reads this simile straightforwardly as anticipating Pompey's triumphant return as a vengeful *umbra* that possesses Brutus and Cato and haunts Egypt; I tentatively agree, with the caveat that this return is qualitatively different because the bull is described in terms of the living Pompey in its love of pomp and spectacle (hence backward-looking), while the narrator merges Pompey's achievements with his *umbra* into an un-containable *nomen*; his argument, in my opinion, overemphasizes the role of Pompey's shade as avenger to the detriment of the much longer and weightier eulogy at the close of Book 8.

discrepancy between simile and subject. In order to make the Pompeian bull victorious, Lucan has to make him formulaic (i.e. Caesarian). The bull is an *exul*, just as Pompey soon will be, but the *secreta* in which he hides also allow him to build up his strength, thus serving as a location for dormancy like the cloud in the Caesarian bolt simile. Lucan elides the hiding motif into the Caesarian dormant phase, thus allowing the Pompeian bull to accomplish what the real Pompey cannot, which is to complete the Caesarian cycle and return to full strength.[37] The importance of this point should not be understated: the poet violates the correspondence between narrative and simile to such an extent that the latter is plainly a fantasy (more than even the Book 1 bolt simile went beyond Caesar's character sketch and thus contained the seeds of the formula). The bull simile here serves not as a mirror to the plot, but a device to express a scenario that goes against the grain of that very plot. In other words, it becomes a vehicle for Lucan's anti-Caesarian voice. As such, it is connected to the various pro-Pompeian outbursts of the narrator, the most well-known of which occurs at 7.213: *et adhuc tibi, Magne, favebunt* ("and still they will favor you, Magnus"). The importance of the narrative voice in Lucan has been noted, especially in connection with its support of Pompey in spite of his flaws.[38] The bull simile is evidence that not only is the narrator a partisan of Pompey, but that even the "normal" poetic voice has ways of declaring its support. It is, in a sense, an expression of mental hiding on the poet's level: just as the Ariminians could only express their complaints in their hearts, so Lucan cannot do so in the narrative proper. Or at least

[37] Thomas (2009/10) 158 cleverly notes that an *agmen* of bulls is neither natural nor present in Lucan's literary models (among them *Aen.* 12.103-0 and *Il.* 2.481-84), thus suggesting future discord between Pompey and the senatorial leaders, which will lead to disaster in Book 7. She concludes that this simile foreshadows problems to come, but on the contrary it further reinforces the sense of fantasy, in that Pompey's triumphant return to Italy is as likely as bulls cooperating with each other.

[38] See Bartsch (1997) 75-93 for an overview of this issue.

not yet: the open partisanship of 7.213 shows that, as the poem progresses and the catastrophe of Pharsalus looms ever closer, the narrative voice becomes bolder in its backing of Pompey until, at the end of Book 8, it will quite literally transfigure his *umbra*.[39]

A final detail further complicates the simile. After the bull has triumphed, he is free to parade *quoslibet in saltus*. However, there is the curious detail of the shepherd, who (apparently in vain) tries to restrain the too-eager animal from prancing around the meadow. To whom could this refer?[40] Here we face another and apparently insoluble disjunction between the simile and its subject, given the lack of reference to an overseer in the main narrative. At first glance, one might suppose that the shepherd refers to some kind of higher power (*fatum* or *Fortuna*, perhaps even the faintest shadow of Jupiter), and that it would somehow be restraining this imaginary triumph, but this reading is not really satisfactory.[41]

I would like to suggest an alternative, one that would break the coherence between simile and subject, but would be more thematically satisfying—namely that the *pastor* also refers to Pompey. He exhibits all of Pompey's traits as we know him from the narrative: like Pompey, the shepherd is also hesitant and unwilling to take action. This suggestion, however, necessitates a shift in the entire reading of the simile, since the bull would now signify Pompey's army. I maintain that this reading works because

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[39] In addition, *cervice recepta* is poignantly ironic, given that *cervix* becomes associated with Pompey's severed head, a point noted by Easton (2011/12) 216-17. Unlike the bull, Pompey cannot be revived after death; his neck cannot be made whole again.

[40] George (1992) 372 and Thomas (2009/10) 154 both view the *pastor* as representing Cato, a plausible suggestion.

[41] Fantham (1992a) 198 mentions Caesar as a possibility, but mostly in jest. It would be completely out of character for Caesar to be pastoral, much less a figure of restraint.

Lucan is actually foreshadowing the situation before the battle of Pharsalus. There, he depicts Pompey's men as eager to fight, driven on by the curse of *furor*, while Pompey tries in vain to restrain them and ultimately fails to do so. Obviously, the army also fails in Book 7, unlike the bull here. The splitting of Pompey's identity between the bull and the shepherd works because it symbolizes the schism between his role as war leader and face of the republican opposition and his real self as a private man in love with peace (recall *dedidicit iam pace ducem* in his Book 1 character sketch). The bull is how the poet wishes to see him, but the real Pompey is the peaceful shepherd. Lucan does not yet bring this dichotomy out into the open (the first real glimpse we see is at the end of Book 5, when Cornelia brings out this private self), but uses the simile to suggest a problem that is for now only dimly perceived in the narrative. Thus the bull simile is dense and multi-layered (like the Caesarian bolt simile also was), containing the seeds of developments that will not come to fruition for several books.

6. Pompey and Rivers: An Introduction

For all the bluster of his speech, however, this section ends with a whimper at lines 2.607-09 as Pompey simply withdraws without putting up a fight. In this light, the looseness of his forces at 2.395 (*sparsas…partis*) seems less a deliberate tactic than an inability to cohere and regenerate formulaically. However, in his final speech of Book 2, Pompey connects his propensity for *fuga* and hiding with a new avenue for resistance. Seeing his path barred both from the north and the west (2.628-30), he tells his son Gnaeus to seek help from the east:

mundi iubeo temptare recessus:
Euphraten Nilumque move, quo nominis usque

> *nostri fama venit, quas est vulgata per urbes*
> *post me Roma ducem. sparsos per rura colonos*
> *redde mari Cilicas…*
> *…totos mea, nate, per ortus*
> *bella feres totoque urbes agitabis in orbe*
> *perdomitas; omnes redeant in castra triumphi*. (2.632-36, 642-44)
>
> I order you to investigate the world's retreats: rouse Euphrates and Nile, to what extent the fame of our name has reached, through which cities Rome's name has spread after my time as general. Return the Cilician farmers, scattered through the countryside, to the sea…son, you will carry my wars through the entire east and you will stir up the conquered cities in the entire earth: let all triumphs return to my camp.

Recessus, which was previously used by Domitius in a derogatory sense, now takes on a formulaic connotation in conjunction with *temptare*. Pompey is depicting the edges of the world as sleeping giants, and the power of the Egyptians and the Parthians is represented by their mighty rivers. Withdrawal is beginning to look like the prelude to regeneration and triumphant return, which is in fact exactly the scenario of the bull simile. Such a strategy, in spite of Pompey's clashes with Caesar in Book 6 and 7, will be his fallback from now on: it causes the great debate in Book 8 about whether to seek help from the Parthians, and will contribute to his death when he loses this argument and decides to seek help in Egypt instead. Thematically, it develops the idea of the Roman *viri* at the beginning of Book 2, who fantasized about all the barbarians of the world descending upon Rome at once as an antidote to civil war. In contrast, Pompey also wants to bring these barbarian forces to Rome, but under his command. He is thus trying to harness the dangerous and potentially apocalyptic nature (as the *viri* saw it) of barbarian invasion into something controllable, just as the Caesarian formula is a predictable, controlled application of *furor*. In doing so, he is also contributing to the extension of civil war into world war. There was already a hint of this in Book 1 when

the arrival of Caesar's legions from Gaul stoked the rumor that the northern barbarians would soon follow in their wake (1.473-84), but Pompey is now actively planning to bring his client states into the conflict. His decision thus turns the entire world into a canvas for the formula: Pompey is trying to rouse the dormant forces from their hiding places (*recessus*) and gather them all at Rome. Centripetal movement means a regeneration of his strength: *omnes redeant in castra triumphi* is a clear image of re-collection of the kind performed by the Caesarian lightning bolt after its shattering.

In addition, *Euphraten Nilumque move* is an example of metonymy, but the literal sense is also not without significance: Lucan is now bringing out into the open the connection between Pompey and rivers that was implied in the Phaethon myth, which will reach its apogee in the association between the Nile's *caput* and Pompey's in Book 10.[42] The irony is that Pompey's awakening of these rivers in a figurative sense (i.e. their nations and troops) is bound to fail, while the Nile's "resistance" to Caesar through Acoreus proves successful (as we have seen): its *caput*, unlike Pompey's, is invulnerable. In addition, the poet will cast the "resistance" of Pompey's *umbra* in a riverine fashion at the end of Book 8. While Pompey tries to enlist rivers now, he will conclude by taking on their behavior.

7. Pompey at Brundisium

In the meantime, Caesar has not been idle, as shown by *generique premit vestigia* ("and he follows hard upon his son-in-law's tracks," 2.652). He is acting true to form

[42] The relationship that Pompey has with eastern rivers puts him in a delicate spot, however, since by extension he is thus involved with the barbarian and effete kingdoms of the east: cf. the rivers on Aeneas' shield belonging to Antony and Cleopatra's camp (the Nile at *Aen.* 8.711-13, the Euphrates at 8.726 and the Araxes at 8.728). This, however, is the paradox of civil war as world war: both Caesar and Pompey have their barbarian contingents complicating their Romanness (though the poet largely ignores Caesar's after Book 1), and it is the Nile and the Egyptians who will cause Caesar the most trouble in the end.

here, but the noun also links this passage with the end of Book 9, where he pursues Pompey's *vestigia* (9.952) after Pharsalus. Both passages are an example of Pompeian *fuga*: Pompey's retreat from Italy initiates a pattern of flight as he continually tries to stay ahead of Caesar (except for Books 6 and 7, in which he makes a stand). Yet at the same time, because Caesar tries to block Pompey's escape by means of a network of chains and towers surrounding Brundisium's narrow access to the sea (2.670-71), Pompey is automatically thrust into a situation that requires formulaic behavior. In a way, his escape is a sort of practice run for the Dyrrhachium campaign in that both cases involve Caesar and Pompey behaving according to each other's paradigms: Pompey is the one who must break out from Caesar's barrier. Thus Lucan describes Pompey's thoughts: *curis animum mordacibus angit, / ut reseret pelagus spargatque per aequora bellum* ("his spirit is wracked with biting care as to how he might unlock the ocean and scatter war through the seas," 2.681-82). Note *spargat* here: now we have seen this verb as fundamental in describing Caesarian formulaic behavior, namely his flooding as control of the surrounding countryside. The way in which Lucan uses it of Pompey, however, is quite different: just as Pompey extended his forces at 2.395 not for domination but as a kind of loose resistance, his scattering of the war over the sea here is a continuation of *fuga*, but in a positive sense. Pompey is proving that the best strategy against Caesar is perpetual evasion and dissipation of his own forces, not to concentrate them into an obstacle that Caesar can easily destroy (in fact, this is precisely the reasoning behind Cato's avoidance of the open sea at 9.30-33). Of course, the fatal flaw in this plan is that Pompey is thereby continually forced to cede ground to his opponent, thus enabling Caesar to continue his own spreading over the world. Moreover, the spreading of civil

war itself is intensely problematic, as Lucan showed at 6.60-63 and which Lentulus in Book 8 will accuse Pompey of doing by enlisting the aid of the Parthians. Nevertheless, this process of continual receding is finally successful in the case of the Nile's *caput*, as we have seen, which "flees" so far that not even the peoples most distant from Rome have ever seen it. Again, a Pompeian move that seems questionable will prove to be successful when it is taken up by a river.[43]

When Pompey finally succeeds in breaking through the encirclement, Lucan chooses to compare his escape to that of the Argo passing through the Symplegades (2.715-19). This is an interesting choice of subject: the Argonauts were voyaging towards a specific goal, whereas Pompey is simply seeking for refuge. Here the difference between narrative and simile is in tone, the simile being far more positive than the narrative (unless Lucan is resuming the theme of journeying to the east: just as the Argonauts traveled to barbarian Colchis, so Pompey also counsels his son to seek help from his eastern client kingdoms).

However, the actual conclusion of the book returns us to harsh reality: even fortune has deserted Pompey (*lassata triumphis / descivit Fortuna tuis,* "Fortune, exhausted by your triumphs, has quit," 2.727-28). Her energy has been depleted by all of his former successes; she cannot regenerate, and thus neither can he. Hence Lucan once again depicts Pompey's journey to the extremities of the world as negative:

> *non quia te superi patrio privare sepulchro*
> *maluerint Phariae busto damnantur harenae:*
> *parcitur Hesperiae. procul hoc et in orbe remoto*
> *abscondat Fortuna nefas, Romanaque tellus*

[43] Moreover, the Brundisium episode also shows Caesar in opposition to water, in this case the ocean. His initial attempt to fill it with *moles* fails because it swallows up the boulders (2.661-64), so he must resort to chains that Lucan compares in a simile to the pontoon bridge that Xerxes built across the Hellespont (2.671-77). Again, water tries to resist Caesar but is at last tamed by him.

> *immaculata sui servetur sanguine Magni*. (2.732-36)
>
> The Pharian sands are condemned by your grave not because the gods preferred to deprive you of a tomb in your own land: they spare Hesperia. May Fortune yet conceal this abomination in a remote corner of the world, and may Roman soil be kept unsullied from the blood of her Magnus.

Remoto and *abscondat* emphasize the hiding motif first seen at Ariminum, which is now linked to *nefas*, since it is Pompey's death that will be hidden as being a boundlessly shameful crime. With his death, the Caesarian sheen of marginalization as prelude to regeneration is removed, as well as *fuga* as a deliberate strategy. Pompey's voyage is exposed as merely a journey to oblivion. Once again we see the narrator's partisanship: it is better that Pompey die in a foreign land because Rome will remain unpolluted, and thus the narrator even wishes for an absence of *fama* about his murder. In a way, such special pleading prepares the ground for the triumphant eulogy at the end of Book 8: the man having died in an obscure, barbarian corner of the world, his *umbra* can thus spread to fill the entire world, "returning" to Rome in the process.

8. Pompey's Troop Catalogue

The next step after Pompey orders distant peoples to be awakened is their mustering, which occurs as a catalogue of troops. First of all, its ominous opening (*interea totum Magni fortuna per orbem / secum casuras in proelia moverat urbes*, "meanwhile Magnus' fortune through the entire world had aroused into battle cities that would fall with him," 3.169-70) not only reminds the reader that civil war now means world war, but also that this mustering of troops, this rousing and coalescing of numerous scattered and slumbering peoples into one climactic battle, is the final formulaic act of his career. While Caesar's catalogue led to a true formulaic breakthrough and resulting flood

and occupation of Rome and Italy, the gathering of Pompey's forces, on the other hand, will have the opposite effect, in that it will make it easier for Caesar to destroy everything in one stroke: *acciperet felix ne non semel omnia Caesar, / vincendum pariter Pharsalia praestitit orbem* ("so that fortunate Caesar might receive everything at one stroke, Pharsalia offered him the world to be conquered all at once," 3.296-97). Yet for all of its monumental futility (such mass again recalls the *pondus* of his Book 1 simile), its very length (128 lines compared to Caesar's 69) not only reveals the greater number and variety of peoples at Pompey's beck and call, but also means that it contains a number of mini-digressions.[44] The Argo appears again in connection with the Thessalian city of Iolcus; however, here the poet comments in a decidedly more pessimistic vein than at the end of Book 2. Instead of looking ahead to new horizons, the Argo in Pompey's catalogue represents an ominous mixing of peoples (*cum rudis Argo / miscuit ignotas temerato litore gentes*, "when unpolished Argo mingled unknown nations with desecrated shore," 3.193-94); the association of the Argo with the transgressive nature of ocean sailing is in accord with literary tradition, and such negative connotations are increased because Pompey is gathering troops to prepare for civil war.[45] In addition, Lucan's earlier mention of Absyrtus at 3.190 suggests the violent result of such a mixture in the myth. Lucan is here suggesting the negative consequences of Pompey's spreading of civil war, which Lentulus will take up in Book 8 when he argues against seeking Parthian assistance.

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[44] Hunink (1992) 104 notes the lack of actual military details; this along with the profusion of geographic and even ethnographic detail amplify the civil war to world-encompassing dimensions.

[45] The Argo's voyage as a breach of natural and divine law is present as far back as Euripides' *Medea*; in Roman literature there are the examples of Catullus 64, Seneca's *Medea*, and Valerius Flaccus. See e.g. Bramble (1970).

A mythological reference such as this also adds a slightly unreal air to Pompey's forces, suggesting (in conjunction with the Phaethon myth and his Book 1 character sketch) a greatness that is only possible in some hazy and distant past. Likewise, some of Pompey's allies, such as Athens, are mere shadows of themselves: *exhausit totas quamvis dilectus Athenas, / exiguae Phoebea tenent navalia puppes / tresque petunt veram credi Salamina carinae* ("although the whole of Athens was exhausted by its levy, a few ships hold Phoebus' docks and three vessels see to it that Salamis is believed to be true," 3.181-83). Even Ilium's assistance carries no symbolic aid, since it is stripped of the victorious associations that belong to the Julian house, instead leaving it only with the Homeric residue of the vanquished: *Iliacae quoque signa manus perituraque castra / ominibus petiere suis, nec fabula Troiae / continuit Phrygiique ferens se Caesar Iuli* ("the troops of Ilium with their own omens also sought their standards and their camps, soon to perish; the tale of Troy did not restrain them, nor did Caesar styling himself the descendant of Phrygian Iulus," 3.211-13). This is a Troy closer to the perished ruins that Caesar visits in Book 9, not the *Romana Pergama* that he seeks to resurrect. Lastly, Ninus as *felix, sic fama* ("fortunate, so rumor says," 3.215) contributes to the sense of bygone greatness.

Pompey and Rivers Redux

Yet rivers also have a central role in Pompey's catalogue: Lucan mentions 23 of them here, which is significantly greater than the number found in Caesar's.[46] This puts the dilemma of Pompey squarely in front of us: he is an uneasy mixture of past and future, of nostalgic reliance on faded eastern powers and, on the other hand, potential in

[46] The figure is from Hunink (1992) 108; Mendell (1942) states that 13 of these are also found at Ovid *Met.* 2.239-59. There are only seven rivers in Caesar's catalogue: *Isara* (1.399), *Atax* (1.403), *Varus* (1.404), *Aturus* (1.420), *Cirta* (1.432), *Rhodanus* (1.433), and *Arar* (1.434).

his connection to greater and more elemental forces that will take up the banner of resistance to Caesar after his death. Thus the Ganges:

> *Movit et Eoos bellorum fama recessus,*
> *qua colitur Ganges, toto qui solus in orbe*
> *ostia nascenti contraria solvere Phoebo*
> *audet et adversum fluctus impellit in Eurum,*
> *hic ubi Pellaeus post Tethyos aequora ductor*
> *constitit et magno vinci se fassus ab orbe est…* (3.229-34)
>
> Rumor of war also stirred the eastern retreats where Ganges is worshipped, who alone in the entire world dares to release his mouths that face rising Phoebus and who drives his waves against opposing Eurus—here, where the Pellaean commander stopped after Tethys' calm and confessed that he was conquered by the great sphere of earth…

First, *recessus* and *movit* echo Pompey's commands in Book 2 to stir up the Nile and Euphrates. Like Egypt and Mesopotamia, India is also personified by its greatest river. Lucan goes beyond his previous example, however: he shows the Ganges openly resisting Alexander the Great (*Pellaeus…ductor*), a figure who serves as Caesar's predecessor in conquest (as shown by Caesar's visit to his tomb in Book 10). In addition, line 3.231 further strengthens the link between Pompey and rivers by echoing the Phaethon myth in the Book 2 Apennine excursus. Like the Po, the Ganges stands out from other rivers (*solus*) by virtue of its ability to face directly the power of the sun, whose connection to Caesar has already been established: *ostia…contraria solvere* suggests that it flows in direct opposition to the sun, just as Acoreus releases the Nile's flood at the end of his speech. In contrast to Alexander's apparent victory over the Ganges in Lucan's Book 10 digression (10.33), here he places such importance on this river in halting Alexander's progress that there is no mention of the Battle of Hydaspes

(or the Hydaspes itself, for that mtter).[47] In other words, it was not man that stopped Alexander, but nature as embodied in a river.[48] It is no wonder, then, that at 10.252 Acoreus associates the Ganges (and the Po) with the origin and course of the Nile, since it plays such a prominent and successful role in opposing this predecessor of Caesarian conquest. In summary, here we see a juxtaposition of the Caesarian tendencies of rivers that we examined in the last chapter and Pompey's attempt to harness them. The contrast between the fundamentally exhausted Pompey and the vitality of these rivers is striking, and one can only conclude, even without the benefit of hindsight in the Nile, that these "client rivers" will prove more capable of resistance than Pompey himself. Thus his catalogue presents a self-contradictory mixture of effete mortal forces coupled with vast natural powers.

The other major rivers that garner attention here are the Tigris and Euphrates. Lucan says of the latter simply that it behaves in a manner reminiscent of the Nile: *sed sparsus in agros / fertilis Euphrates Phariae vice fungitur undae* ("but fertile Euphrates, scattered into the fields, behaves in the manner of the Pharian waters," 3.259-60).[49] On the other hand, he elaborates more fully on the nature of the Tigris:

> *at Tigrim subito tellus absorbet hiatu*
> *occultosque tegit cursus rursusque renatum*
> *fonte novo flumen pelagi non abnegat undis.* (3.261-63)
>
> Yet the earth absorbs the Tigris with sudden chasm and covers its hidden course, and when it has been reborn again from a new source, does not deny the river the waters of the sea.

[47] Hunink (1992) 122.

[48] Lucan, however, also praises the suicidal tendencies of the native Indians (3.240-43); this heedlessness of life is Caesarian, in accordance with the open defiance of the Ganges, and forms a stark contrast to Pompey's tendency to retreat.

[49] Note also that the Euphrates is described thus: *caput…tollit* ("it rears its head," 3.256), just as the ghost of Marius *tollentemque caput* ("and raising his head," 1.582), an additional Caesarian connection.

Lucan gives us a sketch of a river that seems to die, only to be born anew. The Tigris can hide but also rear up again in full force, somewhat like the Nile at 10.247ff; in other words, it can be dormant, but also active. Also, its reemergence from the earth makes it seem as though it has more than one source (*fonte novo*), thus complicating its origin in a way not unlike the Nile's, though obviously less miraculous. Thus, Lucan suggests that Pompey is in charge of forces that will prove to be much more powerful than he is, to the degree that after his death, the narrator molds his *umbra* in their image.

The contrast is all the starker when Lucan completes the catalogue with a simile comparing the size of Pompey's collected forces to that of the Persian rulers Cyrus and Xerxes (3.284-88). He thus shifts focus from contemplation of these immense natural forces back to the flawed reality of mortal domination. Doubly ironic is the fact that Xerxes was infamous for his bridging of the Hellespont, as we saw above: Lucan thus compares Pompey to a nature-dominating tyrant who at the same time is linked with tyrant-defying natural forces. The contradiction cannot hold permanently, and it will be resolved in the end in favor of nature. As a final note, the *tam variae cultu gentes, tam dissona vulgi / ora* ("nations so varied in customs, so discordant the mouths of the mob," 3.289-90) of Pompey's motley army are exactly what the narrator rails against at Pharsalus as filling the empty shell of post-civil war Rome (7.404-07). Instead of the centripetal model of barbarian races flooding toward Rome that Pompey wishes to employ, success against Caesar (as we saw in previous chapters) can only come about from his own exhaustion in pursuit of Pompey to the edge of the Roman world. Only then can Caesar be effectively countered by the Nile's formulaic flooding.

9. Pompey's Continuing Marginalization

The beginning of Book 5 elaborates on another flaw of Pompey that was present *in nuce* in his Book 1 sketch. Lucan describes both sides as *par* (*duces…servavit Fortuna pares*, "Fortune kept the leaders evenly matched," 5.3), although we know from the opening similes of Book 1 that this is not the case. In fact, Lucan hints at their inequality only two lines later: *instabatque dies qui dat nova nomina fastis* ("and the day which would give new names to the calendar was imminent," 5.5) refers to the coming of the new year (48 BC), but *nomen* is never innocent in Lucan. This year also marks the eclipse of republican and senatorial authority—the decline of Pompey's *nomen* and the rise of Caesar's. This is Lucan's description of the senatorial council:

> *peregrina ac sordida sedes*
> *Romanos cepit proceres, secretaque rerum*
> *hospes in externis audivit curia tectis.*
> *nam quis castra vocet tot strictas iure securis,*
> *tot fasces? docuit populos venerabilis ordo*
> *non Magni partes sed Magnum in partibus esse.* (5.9-14)
>
> A foreign, lowly place received the Roman leaders, and a guest senate heard secret state affairs in a foreign abode. For who would call an armed camp so many axes unsheathed lawfully, so many *fasces*? The reverend order instructed the peoples that they were not Magnus' party, but that Magnus was of their party.

There is much packed into these few lines, which repay close consideration. First of all they obviously show the rather pathetic condition of the republican government, effectively in exile after Caesar's occupation of Rome in Book 3. With exile comes a sense of liminality, thus the paradox of *hospes curia*. The narrator provokes this issue with a rhetorical question that attempts to dismiss it. If the republicans are an armed camp, then how can they call themselves a legitimate government, any more so than Caesar can? At the same time, the last two lines, echoed by Lentulus at the end of his

speech (*Magnumque iubete / esse ducem*, "and command Magnus to be the leader," 5.46-47), show in terms of organization what has already been clear in formulaic terms: that because Pompey is leader of the republicans, his role as commander is constrained. Lucan has already planted the seed of this problem in his character outline of Pompey at 1.132-33. Pompey's basic lack of control over his own destiny is depicted as strict adherence to political principle here, but the result is to handicap his military performance, as will be seen at the Battle of Pharsalus, where combat is initiated by the *furor* of his men despite his own hesitation to engage.[50] Thus there is a fundamental mismatch between general and army of a kind that does not exist in Caesar's camp. One might say that while Caesar looks to be in a worse position than Pompey in this book due to the mutiny, this innocent-seeming flaw in the republican camp will eventually prove to be Pompey's downfall in Book 7.[51]

There is also the issue of spatial organization. Being exiled from Rome naturally means losing one's grip on the centrality of the city itself; the republicans' power is marginalized by mere virtue of how far they are from where they are supposed to be, a fact that Lentulus tells them discreetly to ignore: *non qua tellure coacti / quamque procul tectis captae sedeamus ab urbis / cernite* ("look not from what land you are compelled and how far you sit from the homes of your captured city," 5.18-20). This theme links up with the silent complaint of the citizens of Ariminum in Book 1, who wished they were located beyond the *imperium* so as never to be affected by the horrors of civil war. Remoteness also implies powerlessness, however, which is surely the case here. For all

[50] As Ahl (1976) 161-64 notes.

[51] As Masters (1992) 103-04 remarks, reducing Pompey's power may bolster republican values, but the loss is greater than the gain.

of Lentulus' boasting that *rerum nos summa sequetur / imperiumque comes* ("control of the state will accompany us, and command as its comrade," 5.26-27) no matter how far the senate travels to the ends of the earth, there is no real power without maintaining control of the capital.[52] Such is the obvious weakness of Pompeian *fuga*: even if it preserves his own life and forces for somewhat longer, it simply keeps yielding ground to Caesar.

Yet Lentulus continues his optimism:

> *ignaros scelerum longaque in pace quietos*
> *bellorum primus sparsit furor: omnia rursus*
> *membra loco redeunt.* (5.35-37)
>
> The first madness of war has scattered those who were ignorant of crime and settled in long peace: all limbs are again returning to their place.

Like Pompey in Book 2, he is trying to apply a formulaic model to the republican side—those forces that were scattered by the first (Caesarian) *furor* of the war can now revive again and collect themselves into a coherent whole. But *membra*, in bringing the metaphor of the body politic into play here, already belies that optimism. How can you reintegrate a dismembered body, be it physical or metaphorical? In addition, *longaque in pace quietos* connects the scattered Romans with Pompey's character sketch and the Ariminians as fundamentally exhausted and incapable of regeneration. Perhaps nowhere else does Lucan so starkly express the Pompeian attempt to be Caesarian and its ultimate failure. Unlike the Caesarian thunderbolt, the republican body politic cannot be re-collected once it has been scattered or shattered: as Lucan already described, *ruit irrevocabile vulgus* (1.509). It is no coincidence that Lentulus also vehemently argues against Pompey's enlistment of the Parthians in Book 8: he is still deluded in thinking

[52] See Rossi (2000) 582.

that the republicans can revive on their own without barbarian aid, whereas Pompey has already prepared to request their help since Book 2. Yet this strategy will fail as well, leaving it up to the narrator to redeem his legacy through verbal and thus immaterial resistance.

10. Cornelia as Pompey's Refuge

The appearance of Cornelia inevitably complicates matters for Pompey, though her presence also reiterates and develops previously discussed aspects of his character. As the sole protagonist in the poem to have a private life, Pompey is thus prevented from single-minded participation in civil war. This is in stark contrast to Caesar, whose single-minded obsession with destroying his former son-in-law admits of no rival claims on his attention (excepting the predatory Cleopatra, who as we saw works her charms only when Caesar is already sated), and with Cato, whose bizarre remarriage to Marcia only binds them to each other more tightly in ascetic resolve: see Lucan's negative enumeration of what their wedding lacks at 2.354-71, and note that Marcia returns to Cato in a state of mourning, and thus *non aliter placitura viro* ("not otherwise about to please her husband," 2.337). As a result, Pompey is less effective than they are at achieving a single-minded unity of thought and action with his army, a flaw which eventually seals his fate at Pharsalus. The great irony here is that although his relationship with Cornelia is the most recognizably human in the epic, it also prevents him from putting all his heart into his army.[53] Like his deferral to republican niceties at the beginning of Book 5, proper Roman behavior contributes to his defeat, demonstrating the uselessness of

[53] For Pompey's need to be loved, see Ahl (1976) 175. Narducci (2002) 296 contrasts Pompey and Cornelia's relationship with Cato's ascetic remarriage to Marcia.

traditional values in civil war and, ultimately, a Caesarian world. In any case, the sections of the poem describing his interaction with Cornelia are rich and multifaceted, covering issues beyond the main concerns of the present study.[54] However, they also provide a background for why Pompey fails to achieve his goal at Pharsalus.

First, it is fitting that Lucan first introduces his domestic interaction with Caesar's successful formulaic behavior: *undique collatis in robur Caesaris armis* ("with Caesar's army from all sides gathered into strength," 5.722) makes the contrast all the greater between a general who can successfully follow this pattern of behavior, while his opponent is torn between the public and private spheres. In fact, Lucan sets the tone for Pompey's dilemma by describing his marriage (i.e. wife) as an *onus* that needs to be put away for safekeeping (5.724-27). This noun has a negative connotation in that Pompey wants to put aside his private life temporarily in order to concentrate on military affairs, but one might compare it to Pompey's *pondus* as described in his Book 1 oak simile (as well as to how Caesar describes himself as a positive *onus* during the storm at 5.586). From these examples, it can be argued that Cornelia is more an essential part of Pompey than a nuisance (as indeed Pompey will do), and that by leaving her behind, he is thus not really putting himself on the line at Pharsalus. Lucan illustrates his basic conflict at 5.728-31: Pompey's love for her is such that he would escape the coming catastrophe by staying with her, which in practice amounts to a dereliction of duty.[55] Thus Cornelia is a

[54] Lucan's portrayal of Pompey and Cornelia is strongly influenced by the episode of Ceyx and Alcyone in Ovid *Met.* 11: see Bruère (1951) 223. There are also similarities between the myth and the situation of Pompey's burial at the end of Book 8. For example, before he sets sail, Alcyone warns her husband that *saepe in tumulis sine corpore nomina legi* ("often on tombs I read names without bodies," *Met.* 11.429). Ahl (1976) 181-89 interestingly compares Pompey to Vergil's Dido.

[55] Lucan's model is clearly that of Aeneas' dilemma in *Aen.* 4 between staying with Dido and his destiny in Italy. However, that choice between *pietas* and (barbarian) indulgence, already anguished in itself, is

blandae…morae (5.732-33), but at the same she *aversi petit oscula grata mariti* ("she seeks pleasing kisses from her husband, though turned away," 5.736); this dubious emotional state is mirrored in the ambiguity of what Cornelia represents for Pompey—as both comfort and burden.

Her role is complicated by the appearance of words that recall the hiding motif:

> *cedendum est bellis, quorum tibi tuta latebra*
> *Lesbos erit. desiste preces temptare: negavi*
> *iam mihi. non longos a me patiere recessus;*
> *praecipites aderunt casus: properante ruina*
> *summa cadunt.* (5.743-47)
>
> I must yield to war, from which Lesbos will be a safe hiding-place for you. Cease attempting prayers: I have already denied them to myself. You will not suffer long retreat from me; precipitous events are already here: the highest things fall when ruin hastens.

Lucan's usage of both *latebra* and *recessus* indicates a deliberate attempt to integrate Cornelia into the larger scheme of hiding. While we have seen the double-edged nature of *recessus*, meaning both a place of obscurity for the vanquished (which Domitius defiantly rejects) as well as a source of dormant power (as shown in Pompey's injunctions to his sons to stir up the east), its appearance with *latebra* tips the balance in favor of the former. In other words, Pompey is conceptualizing Cornelia as a shameful retreat in the mold of Ariminum to which he can return after his defeat, unlike his own "retreat" toward the east. This negative interpretation is supported by Pompey's startling prediction of impending disaster. It seems that in her presence, he can reveal the truth of what he believes will be the eventual outcome of the war. Pompey predicts that after his defeat, he will become as silent and obscure as the citizens of occupied Ariminum.

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increased here, since Pompey must choose between a lawful and pious love for his wife and continuing a civil war that he knows might end in his downfall.

Furthermore, Cornelia will become associated with *latebra*, to the point that in Book 9, she becomes consumed by sort of death-in-life (though as 5.774-75 shows, she already has this tendency).

Ironically, if we read *recessus* and *latebra* in the Caesarian sense as a core, we can see just how un-formulaic Cornelia is, since what she represents—domestic, private love and, after Pompey's death, a morbid obsession with death—cannot serve as a vital source, as opposed to Caesarian dynamos such as Antaeus' or Scaeva's. Yet if we play with this idea further, it also explains why Pompey is doomed to fail:

> *si numina nostras*
> *impulerint acies, maneat pars optima Magni,*
> *sitque mihi, si fata prement victorque cruentus,*
> *quo fugisse velim.* (5.756-59)
>
> If the gods break our squadrons, may the best part of Magnus remain, and may there be a place where I should wish to flee, if the fates and the bloody victor shall pursue.

He now turns the *fuga* dynamic in a new direction: the only real outcome of his flight is into her arms. This is important because from the first book, escape for Pompey had always meant from Caesar (and geographically from Rome). The dynamic had been centrifugal, a path towards marginalization and oblivion only tempered by his desire to stir up the barbarians in preparation for the centripetal return trip. By fleeing towards Cornelia, Pompey will still doom himself to irrelevance and *latebra*, but at least with his "other half." Thus *pars optima Magni* is not just a term of endearment, but it reveals that Pompey can never be an integrated whole without her, meaning either in public life or on the battlefield.

Cornelia retorts that Lesbos will not be obscure because of her fame: *notescent litora clari / nominis exilio, positaque ibi coniuge Magni / quis Mytilenaeas poterit*

nescire latebras? ("the shores will become renowned from the exile of a famous name, and who can be ignorant of Mytilenean retreats when Magnus' wife is placed there?" 5.784-86). Ironically, for all of Cornelia's and Pompey's wishes for her to be hidden, *clari nominis* indicates that she still participates in his *fama*; likewise, Caesar relies on Pompey's *fama* as he pursues him after Pharsalus. There can be no final refuge to which Pompey can escape, at least while he is still alive: the only *latebra* that cannot be pried open will prove to be the Nile's *caput*. As will be seen, his murder changes everything: he will welcome his death as an opportunity for him to be transfigured from obscurity into post-mortem, immaterial *fama*, and the narrator will finish this transformation by replacing his former pattern of *fuga* with that of riverine overflow and flooding.

11. Pompey at Dyrrhachium: A Brief Glimpse of the Formula

Book 6 finds Pompey and Caesar matched face-to-face for the first time in the epic since the end of Book 2. Perhaps not coincidentally, in both cases circumstances force the protagonists to adopt each other's modes of behavior. Just as Caesar tried to prevent Pompey's breakthrough onto the open sea, so at Dyrrhachium he constructs a ring of fortifications to block Pompey in again, necessitating the latter's Caesarian breakout once again. In formulaic terms, the Dyrrhachium campaign is thus a vast extension of the dynamics of the escape at Brundisium, but structurally speaking it is also important as Pompey's moment of success before he reverts to form and is decisively defeated at Pharsalus; previous studies have not adequately recognized this fact.[56] Yet at the same time, Lucan also reinforces Pompey's relationship with nature, as shown in his description of Dyrrhachium and environs:

[56] Rosner-Siegel (1983) 174 overemphasizes Pompey's immobility as the target of a siege.

> *non opus hanc veterum nec moles structa tuetur*
> *humanusque labor facilis, licet ardua tollat,*
> *cedere vel bellis vel cuncta moventibus annis,*
> *sed munimen habet nullo quassabile ferro*
> *naturam sedemque loci; nam clausa profundo*
> *undique et illisum scopulis revomentibus aequor*
> *exiguo debet, quod non est insula, collo*. (6.19-25)
>
> This [city] is not guarded by the work of ancients, nor by constructed mass and human labor which, though it raise lofty objects, easily yields to war or to the years that change all, but it has for protection the nature and location of the place, which no weapon can shake; for enclosed everywhere by the deep and by cliffs spewing out the sea that strikes them, it is not an island thanks to a tiny neck.

Pompey thus chooses a location where he can be protected by nature alone, without any need for man-made defenses (*defendens tutam vel solis rupibus urbem*, "defending a city secure by its very rocks alone," 6.18). This is in stark contrast to Caesar's usual *modus operandi*, which is to wreak havoc on nature in order to construct his own works: *franguntur montes, planumque per ardua Caesar / ducit opus* ("mountains are shattered and Caesar leads his works flat through the heights," 6.38-39).[57] Even if Caesar's walls may be superhuman (*extruitur quod non aries impellere saevus, / quod non ulla queat violenti machina belli*, "something is constructed which neither the savage battering-ram nor any engine of violent war can shatter," 6.36-37), they are still artificial. Long after Caesar's defenses will have crumbled, Petra and its isthmus will still remain.[58] Admittedly, this is small consolation for the vanquished, who still must live within a human time frame, but as we saw, it was a major part of Acoreus' speech in that the Nile is part of an integrated cosmic harmony that a mortal such as Caesar could not hope to comprehend, much less disturb. As was foreshadowed in his Book 3 catalogue,

[57] Note his wholesale leveling of forests at Massilia (3.394-98 and 3.440-45).

[58] Cf. the narrator's statements at 7.809ff that Caesar's denying burial to the corpses of Pharsalus has no effect because they will be consumed by natural processes anyway.

Pompey's resistance will be absorbed into and thus superseded by the eternal resistance of nature against tyrants. Caesar will fail to penetrate the Nile's deepest secrets, and the river will to continue its benevolent cycle long after his death.

Since Caesar's goal is to prevent Pompey's breakout, the two must necessarily switch positions in this campaign—Caesar must be the boundary, while the presence of this barrier will induce Pompey to break it (at least until matters get confused in the Scaeva episode).[59] Thus Pompey takes on formulaic characteristics, but like Caesar he first needs an obstacle to induce a reaction. The latter provides him with one: *hic avidam belli rapuit spes improba mentem / Caesaris, ut vastis diffusum collibus hostem / cingeret ignarum ducto procul aggere valli* ("here a monstrous hope seized Caesar's mind, avid for war—that he surround the enemy, sprinkled over the vast hills and ignorant of the rampart's mound being drawn far away," 6.29-31). Faced with being contained, Pompey overflows, though not in an entirely Caesarian manner:

> *non desunt campi, non desunt pabula Magno,*
> *castraque Caesareo circumdatus aggere mutat:*
> *flumina tot cursus illic exorta fatigant,*
> *illic mersa suos: operumque ut summa revisat*
> *defessus Caesar mediis intermanet agris.* (6.43-47)
>
> Magnus is not lacking for fields nor fodder, and he changes camp though surrounded by Caesar's mound: so many rivers rising here and sinking there exhaust their courses: and in order that he may visit the farthest of his works, Caesar remains in the middle of his fields, exhausted.

Instead of directly breaking through Caesar's envelopment, he tries an indirect approach, constantly shifting his center of gravity and thus forcing Caesar to keep up with him. In fact, Pompey is practicing a sort of *fuga* within the sizeable amount of territory he has at

[59] Thus *recessus*, a word associated with Pompey, even describes Caesar's walls here: *magnoque recessu / amplexus fines saltus nemorosaque tesca* ("and embracing regions, glades, and wooded wildlands with great envelopment," 6.40-41).

his disposal, and thus turning the strategic tables on his adversary. By avoiding direct contact with Caesar, Pompey wears Caesar down according to Caesar's own Book 3 simile at Massilia: in the absence of a static opponent or obstacle, his energy will dissipate. Even though this is only the opening round of a lengthy campaign, Pompey has at least succeeded in exhausting Caesar, a rare feat before Pharsalus. And perhaps it is not coincidental that he is helped by rivers here: Lucan is somewhat unclear as to how exactly he benefits from them (perhaps they allow him to set up camp at multiple locations), but Pompey's shifting, winding maneuvers are not unlike Acoreus' rhetorical (and the Nile's physical) detours.

In any case, the campaign has just begun. Caught off guard by Caesar's still-spreading fortifications, Pompey tries the same tactic of spreading his forces out: *ipse quoque a tuta deducens agmina Petra / diversis spargit tumulis, ut Caesaris arma / laxet et effuso claudentem milite tendat* ("he himself also leading his army from safe Petra scatters it among various mounds, so that he might loosen Caesar's army and stretch Caesar out, who is enclosing him, with his spread-out troops," 6.70-72). Again, Pompey is not yet breaking through, but only diffusing his army to force a wider encirclement by Caesar (recall *sparsas extendere partis* at 2.395). Yet all this spreading has a cost: the constant running of the horses weakens the soil to the point where there seems to be trouble finding enough fodder, and accordingly the horses grow weak from starvation (6.81-87). This is compounded by the arrival of a deadly plague (6.88-90). Just as water must grow weaker the more widely it spreads, perhaps the same is happening to Pompey as well: only being half-formulaic still carries with it its disadvantages.

After his army recovers from these hardships, however, Pompey is ready to break out in earnest:

> *Ut primum libuit ruptis evadere claustris*
> *Pompeio cunctasque sibi permittere terras,*
> *non obscura petit latebrosae tempora noctis,*
> *et raptum furto soceri cessantibus armis*
> *dedignatur iter: latis exire ruinis*
> *quaerit, et impulso turres confringere vallo,*
> *perque omnis gladios et qua via caede paranda est.* (6.118-24)
>
> When Pompey first resolved to escape after breaking the barriers and to grant himself all the territory, he does not seek the shadowy times of secret night, and disdains a stealthily stolen march when his father-in-law's army is idle: he aims to move out with widespread ruin and through all opposing swords, to strike the ramparts and smash the towers, and where a path must be prepared by slaughter.

This is the most nakedly formulaic language describing Pompey in the entire epic. *Ruptis…claustris*, *latis…ruinis*, and *qua via caede paranda est* are all reminiscent of Caesar's love of havoc as intermittently described in the first three books. The language of 6.119 is that of the overflow paradigm, again recalling Caesar's bursting onto the fields of Italy. Unlike his earlier maneuvers, Pompey is no longer settling for deflecting or delaying Caesar's building, but is now aiming for a direct breakthrough. On this note, *latebrosae* is a clear sign that Pompey is rejecting the hiding paradigm: Caesar's inactivity is no signal for Pompey to bypass him, but instead the occasion for a direct assault. For a moment, it almost seems as though Pompey can actually turn back the clock, as if his *praecordia* were actually as fired up as he boasts in his Book 2 speech. In fact, Pompey is so powerful that he even manages to vanquish Caesar's guards by shock alone, just as Caesar was able to cause panic at Rome by the mere rumor of his arrival: *ne quid victoria ferro / deberet, pavor attonitos confecerat hostes* ("so that victory would owe nothing to the sword, fear had consumed his stunned enemies," 6.130-31). He is

about to make his breakthrough and thus finally become fully formulaic when Scaeva, that Caesarian doppelganger, intervenes.

Although Scaeva's paradoxical performance as a Caesarian wall temporarily blocks Pompey, the latter remains undeterred:

> *nec magis hac Magnus castrorum parte repulsus*
> *intra claustra piger dilato Marte quievit,*
> *quam mare lassatur, cum se tollentibus Euris*
> *frangentem fluctus scopulum ferit aut latus alti*
> *montis adest seramque sibi parat unda ruinam*. (6.263-67)
>
> Nor did Magnus, repelled from this part of the camp, sluggishly rest within the barrier and delay war, any more than the sea is tired when the blasts of Eurus rise and it strikes the cliff that breaks the waves, or it gnaws at the side of the lofty mountain and its waves prepare for themselves a coming collapse.

This is the first of two similes that Lucan deploys in rapid succession comparing him to bodies of water: the second is the Po, whose anti-Caesarian credentials need no further explanation by now. Pompey is now at the height of his formulaic powers. Note *dilato*: this word, associated with delay (Curio uses it at 1.281 to admonish Caesar not to tarry; Lucan uses it to describe Pompey's unwillingness to leave Cornelia at 5.792, and Pompey himself will use it at 7.107 in favor of not doing battle), is now rejected by Pompey here. From enlisting the aid of foreign rivers in Book 3 (representing their nations), he has now become a body of water himself; his connection to water is actually explicit and not inferred as in Caesar's overflow paradigm. The simile is in perfect accord with the formula, since the presence of the *scopulum* as obstacle induces a repeated battering by the ocean wave. Yet there are also important clues to the eventual failure of a formulaic Pompey: the cliff continually shatters the waves (*frangentem fluctus*) and the ocean thus achieves nothing but its own destruction (*seramque sibi parat unda ruinam*). Moreover,

the energy of the sea is not even all its own: *se tollentibus Euris* indicates an outside force driving it on, suggesting that Pompey's energy is somehow artificially maintained here and not an intrinsic part of his own nature. Thus, this simile is the inversion of the Book 2 bull simile: instead of suggesting a positive scenario at odds with the narrative, the ocean simile points to a negative reality at odds with the current optimistic situation. Even though Pompey finally breaks out of the blockade and forces Caesar to retreat, the ocean's *ruina* looks ahead to the real failure of Pompey not to achieve the decisive blow by defeating Caesar, and perhaps to his demise at Pharsalus as well.

Yet in the immediate context, Pompey takes the initiative again. This time, he actually manages to take over two of Caesar's outposts (6.268-69); while this may not grant him full freedom, at least it is one step closer. His overflowing is now truly formulaic: *armaque late / spargit et effuso laxat tentoria campo* ("he scatters his troops widely and expands his tents over the broad plain," 6.269-70). Accordingly, Lucan emphasizes it with a simile about the overflowing Po:

> *sic pleno Padus ore tumens super aggere tutas*
> *excurrit ripas et totos concutit agros;*
> *succubuit si qua tellus cumuloque furentem*
> *undarum non passa ruit, tum flumine toto*
> *transit et ignotos operit sibi gurgite campos:*
> *illos terra fugit dominos, his rura colonis*
> *accedunt donante Pado*. (6.272-78)
>
> Thus the Po, swelling with full mouth, runs over its banks (though safe because of their mounds) and destroys all the fields; wherever the earth succumbs and collapses, unable to endure it raging with a mass of water, the river then passes through with its entire stream and covers plains unknown to it with its eddies: some owners are deserted by their land, other farmers receive fields as the Po grants them.

That Lucan describes Pompey's movement in terms of a river, and no less the Po (which had the power to face and defeat Caesarian fire in Phaethon), simply confirms his association with rivers in their mutual resistance to Caesar.[60] What is striking about Lucan's description of the Po here, however, is its violence, a stark contrast to its literally world-saving role in Book 2. Its banks have been reinforced (*aggere tutas*), but they cannot stop the river from destroying the fields (*concutit*). Such destructive flooding also sets it apart from the Nile's, which makes Egyptian civilization possible; instead, the Po wreaks havoc on human sustenance. Here, aquatic power is not deployed in opposition to Caesar, but having taken the initiative, it acts like him. This should be no surprise, since Caesar already utilizes the overflowing model for his own domination, but to see an actual river in the text behaving in such a manner complicates matters. In addition, *illos terra fugit dominos*, while another example of Lucanian hypallage, is also thematically potent, since this piece of earth is behaving as Pompey did when Caesar rushed toward Rome in Book 1, thus further cementing Pompey's behavior as Caesarian. Finally, the last two lines are another simile "tail" that do not find correspondence to the subject: instead, the redistribution of land brought about by the Po's flood anthropomorphizes the river. In particular, *donante* gives it a regal or even despotic character, as it arbitrarily "decides" who loses land and who gains it. The tail on this simile thus stings yet again, as Lucan suggests that such awesome power must corrupt the wielder: if Pompey insists on trying to regenerate, he will inevitably become as despotic as Caesar himself (recall the narrator's complaint that a Sulla would be needed in order to conclude the war decisively here, as we saw above). Fortunately, Pompey's defeat and death obviate the

[60] As noted by Rosner-Siegel (1983) 175.

need to confront this troubling moral impasse, freeing the narrator to redeem his memory at the end of Book 8.

In terms of the formula, this breakthrough leads Pompey to a need for dormancy (*Pompeiana quies*, 6.283), thus giving Caesar time to counterattack. However, Pompey ambushes him and is about to rout Caesar's arms when he puts on the brakes: *totus mitti civilibus armis / usque vel in pacem potuit cruor: ipse furentis / dux tenuit gladios* ("all the blood could have been shed in civil war, even for peace: yet the general himself checked his raging swords," 6.299-301). Pompey's action here contrasts with his failure to restrain his army's *furor* at Pharsalus (ironically, that battle could have been prevented had he given way to their fury here). In the light of the ominous Po simile, however, *totus…cruor* seems far too casual, for the aftermath of a formulaic flooding is total control: recall also Nigidius Figulus' pithy statement that the aftermath of civil war only brings about a *dominus* (1.670). The narrative voice is beginning to show its Pompeian partisanship, and it will only increase in volume from this point forward.

Further signs of this pro-Pompeian stance are evident here: *ultimus esse dies potuit tibi, Roma, malorum, / exire e mediis potuit Pharsalia fatis* ("this could have been the last day of evil for you, Rome; Pharsalia could have vanished from fate," 6.312-13). In order for Pompey to have vanquished Caesar, he could not have been so *pius* (6.304-05) toward his *socer*. In fact, the narrator goes so far as to wish that Sulla could have been in charge instead of Pompey (6.301-03). This is a shocking statement, considering the litany of Sulla's horrors in the Book 2 flashback. Herein lies the danger of a fully revived Pompey—namely that he might revert to the ways of his mentor, or at least his

youth under Sulla's tutelage, as Caesar suggests in his Book 1 speech.[61] The connection of Sulla to a hypothetical victory at Dyrrhachium suggests the nightmare of a Sullan Pompey as victor at Rome. Yet of course, the alternative of prolonging civil war indefinitely is no real solution: Lentulus will throw the image of civil war as overflowing blood in his commander's face when Pompey proposes enlisting the Parthians. Only Pompey's death and the transformation of resistance from physical to spiritual will bring about a morally pure resistance.

12. Pompey at Pharsalus: Severance from the Formula

After Pompey's flirtation with Caesarian verve in Book 6, the beginning of Book 7 plunges him right back into a focus on the past, thus restoring him to his proper condition as exhausted and eclipsed by Caesar. His dream before the battle of Pharsalus thus resumes important themes of his Book 1 character sketch: there Lucan outlined his love for popular attention, while here this desire is fulfilled when he actually dreams of himself as the spectacle in his own theater (7.9-10). In a simile, the poet compares his dream to the occasion of his momentous triumph in 71 BC, granted to him by the Senate on behalf of his victory over Sertorius and Spartacus.[62] This was Pompey at his youthful peak, behaving in an extralegal fashion similar to Caesar; it is the Pompey that he can never return to despite his best efforts at Dyrrhachium. As such, he is fleeing not only physically, but also mentally: *seu fine bonorum / anxia mens curis ad tempora laeta refugit* ("or at the end of success, his mind anxious with worry fled to happy times," 7.19-

[61] As Bartsch (1997) 88-89 notes.

[62] See Plut. *Pomp.* 21-22.

20). Rome itself becomes an artifact of memory for him, and his feelings for the city take on a deeply personal cast:

> *donassent utinam superi patriaeque tibique*
> *unum, Magne, diem, quo fati certus uterque*
> *extremum tanti fructum raperetis amoris*. (7.30-32)
>
> If only the gods had granted to you and your country one day, Magnus, on which each of you, sure of fate, might have seized the last enjoyment of such a great love.

The similarity between 7.32 and *extremusque perit tam longi fructus amoris* at 5.794 ("and the uttermost enjoyment of such a great love is lost") is striking and surely not accidental.[63] For Pompey, his feelings for Rome are indistinguishable from those for Cornelia; space becomes time, as a refuge to obscurity is tantamount to his own personal *recherche du temps perdu*. This is important to keep in mind in the next two books, for it will explain Pompey's decisive separation from Cornelia at the moment of his death: there in his mind's eye he looks triumphantly into the future, thus shedding both his wife and his past *fama* for a glorious afterlife as a free-floating *umbra*. The association of Rome with the past also underlies Lucan's vision of national mourning for his death:

> *nunc quoque, tela licet paveant victoris iniqui,*
> *nuntiet ipse licet Caesar tua funera, flebunt,*
> *sed dum tura ferunt, dum laurea serta Tonanti.*
> *o miseri, quorum gemitus texere dolorem,*
> *qui te non pleno pariter planxere theatro.* (7.40-44)
>
> And now, though they fear the unjust victor's weapons, though Caesar himself announce your death, they will weep, but while they bear incense and linked garlands to the Thunderer. O wretched people, whose groans conceal grief, who did not mourn you together in a full theater.

The Romans' silent lament is another example of the hiding motif that we have seen from Book 1—silent because even though they do groan aloud, this sign of mourning is

[63] Ahl (197) 180-81.

corrupted due to autocratic sanction. They cannot truly act as Pompey's audience in death as they were in his life (*theatro* is a deliberate reference to *theatri* in Pompey's character sketch at 1.133). The image of Pompey as the center of spectacle, which was such a central element of his infatuation with the past, has now been transformed into a picture of death, but also of oppression under tyranny. In contrast, the narrator's Book 8 eulogy rejects mourning in favor of triumphalism.

Pompey's love for Rome and clinging to the past also creates distance from his men:

> *dira subit rabies: sua quisque ac publica fata*
> *praecipitare cupit; segnis pavidusque vocatur*
> *ac nimium patiens soceri Pompeius et orbis*
> *indulgens regno, qui tot simul undique gentis*
> *iuris habere sui vellet pacemque timeret.* (7.51-55)
>
> A dreadful madness comes upon them: each desires to hasten his own fate and that of the republic; they call Pompey lazy and afraid and far too patient of his father-in-law and indulging in world rule, because he wished at the same time to have so many nations from everywhere under his sway and feared peace.

While Pompey keeps gazing to an irretrievable past, they are chomping at the bit and ready to rush into a nightmarish future. From their point of view, everything from 7.7-45 looks like a *mora*; *regnum* slyly recalls Caesar's Book 1 complaint at Pompey's self-satisfied domination (1.314-15).[64] This outlook is appropriate, as the Pompey of the oak simile is precisely such a static figure and the definition of the status quo, not the forward-looking Pompey of Book 6. However, this allows Lucan a neat moral escape route for Pompey: by portraying Pharsalus as a battle which he is dragged into (which

[64] App. *BC* 2.67 and Plut. *Pomp.* 67 both record that Pompey was forced to fight at Pharsalus to allay rumors that he was prolonging the war out of a desire to rule (cf. also Caes. *BC* 3.82); they also state that Pompey was called "Agamemnon" or "King of Kings" for this reason.

matches the historical record), he can then cut himself off from the resulting disaster and thus his entire public persona, which frees him to rush back to Cornelia.

After Cicero (in a touch of literary license by Lucan) exhorts him to fight, Pompey expresses his pessimism regarding the coming battle: *ingemuit rector sensitque deorum / esse dolos et fata suae contraria menti* ("the commander groaned and perceived that these were the gods' tricks and that the fates were opposed to his will," 7.85-86).[65] Such foreboding is in accord with Pompey's negative feelings at the end of Book 5. However, Lucan shows a new side to Pompey's pessimism in his exclamation *quis furor, o caeci, scelerum?* ("what madness for crime is this, O blind ones?" 7.95). These words recall the horror of the narrator in the proem to Book 1: *quis furor, o cives, quae tanta licentia ferri?* ("what madness is this, O citizens, what great lack of restraint of the sword?" 1.8).[66] In addition, his gnomic statement *multos in summa pericula misit / venturi timor ipse mali* ("the very fear of approaching evil has sent many into the greatest danger," 7.104-05) recalls and explains Lucan's pithy *in bellum fugitur* ("they escape into war," 1.504). By making him echo the words of the narrator, Lucan blurs the distinction between character and narrator, thus virtually making Pompey an apparent bystander to the action instead of one its protagonists, as if even before the battle he has already somehow distanced himself from the coming catastrophe and thus absolved himself from

[65] Sklenář (2003) 111 sees this statement as a step in Pompey's realization of his limits within a Stoic world order, but this is perhaps too optimistic in light of his Book 8 plans.

[66] In both examples, Lucan is most likely drawing on Laocoön's warning to the Trojans not to admit the wooden horse into their city: *quae tanta insania, cives?* ("citizens, what is this great madness?" *Aen.* 2.42). In addition, both Pompey and the Trojan priest are old men whose warnings go unheeded to the doom of their countrymen, and who will both suffer an early demise in connection with their nation's downfall.

the responsibility for its *nefas*.[67] In any case, he also brings up strategic reasons for not risking battle at this time: he is successfully starving out the Caesarians and thus inducing in them a desire to fight (7.97-101). On the other hand, however, he boasts of his new recruits' war-fever: *si modo virtutis stimulis iraeque calore / signa petunt* ("if they seek standards from valor's spur and anger's heat," 7.103-04). He proclaims his skill in forcing a victory without having to take the initiative, while on the other hand praising the verve of his men, all while ignoring that such *ira* is exactly what is goading them to a fight he does not want. Pompey is clearly losing control of the situation. Almost as a default position, he settles on the familiar *mora*:[68]

> *fortissimus ille est*
> *qui, promptus metuenda pati, si comminus instent,*
> *et differe potest*. (7.105-07)
>
> He is bravest who, ready to endure dreadful things if they press close at hand, can also delay them.

This would be a logical decision if Pompey were basing it on the weakness of the formula that Caesar outlined in Book 3—namely that an absence of an enemy creates dissipation. Yet it does not seem to work here, since Pompey's denying battle to Caesar's army through starvation has the effect, as he himself says, of making them more eager to fight. In any case, Pompey does not share the *furor* of his men when it counts: at Dyrrhachium he restrained their rage, and here he simply gives up: *sic fatur et arma / permittit populis frenosque furentibus ira / laxat* ("thus he speaks and grants the peoples their weapons and slackens the reigns for those who rage with anger," 7.123-25). In terms of the formula,

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[67] Leigh (1997) 147 cites 7.61 *in Pompeianis votum est Pharsalia castris* ("Pharsalia is the wish in the Pompeian camp") as if Pompey is somehow responsible, but misses the fact that it is Pompey who does not want to fight.

[68] The sentiment expressed here is reminiscent of the historical role of Fabius Cunctator in warding off Hannibal. For Pompey as Fabius, see Masters (1992) 1 n.1 and 9, as well as Narducci (2002) 191-94.

the madness of Pompey's army is doomed because it does not derive from their general as does Caesar's; without a core, it can only be mindless and without direction.

As an aside, the heavenly omens that meet Pompey's army as they march to the battlefield are suffused with Caesarian presence:

> *nam, Thessala rura*
> *cum peterent, totus venientibus obstitit aether*
> [*inque oculis hominum fregerunt fulmina nubes*]
> *adversasque faces immensoque igne columnas*
> *et trabibus mixtis avidos typhonas aquarum*
> *detulit atque oculos ingesto fulgure clausit…* (7.152-57)
>
> For when they aimed for the Thessalian countryside, all of heaven blocked them as they came [and the clouds burst lightning on the eyes of men] and sent down opposing torches and columns of immense fire and cyclones greedy for water mixed with meteors, and closed their eyes by piling on lightning…

The sky rains down fire of all shapes and sizes: *columnas* and *trabibus* recall the solid fiery shapes at 1.532-33 upon Caesar's arrival at Rome. In addition, *avidos typhonas aquarum* reiterates the fire-water elemental contrast between Caesar and Pompey. The real sign of Caesar, though, is that these shapes are too bright for Pompey's men to look at, just as the Caesarian thunderbolt in Book 1 blinded men's eyes (*obliqua praestringens lumina flamma*, "blinding eyes with slanting flame," 1.154). In the absence of Jupiter, Caesar has already occupied the heavens and is already attacking Pompey's men before the actual battle begins, as Lucan describes the corrosive effects of these celestial phenomena on their arms (7.158-60). There could be no clearer sign that the Pompeian side is doomed.

However, Pompey's last speech before the battle sees him wax formulaic again: *totas effundite vires* ("pour fourth all your strength," 7.344) alludes to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1.278, where Neptune commands the rivers to overflow in order to bring about the universal flood.[69] The speech is laden with additional formulaic language: *quae vincere possent / omnia contulimus* ("we have gathered everything that could conquer," 7.355-56) brings to a culmination Pompey's commands in Book 3 telling his sons to seek aid from all over the east so that he might reconstitute his strength. This in itself is a sub-theme of the speech; Pompey keeps emphasizing that the whole world has gathered in this spot to fight: *toto simul utimur orbe* ("we are using the entire world at the same time," 7.362). Unfortunately, not only will this amassed force fail him, but, at a strategic level, becoming packed and coherent is exactly what Caesar requires in an opponent. Spatially speaking, Pharsalus has become the midpoint of the world (in this way displacing Rome), to which everything has converged from all corners, and from which everything will disperse again.[70] Thus in the overall picture, Pharsalus is where civil war itself overflows and scatters over the rest of the world, while Pompey's strength is decisively shattered here and will not be able to be regenerated.

Likewise, he imagines encircling Caesar's troops: *nonne superfusis collectum cornibus hostem / in medium dabimus?* ("won't we spread our wings around and move the packed enemy into the middle?" 7.365-66). As we saw in Chapter 3, however, it is his army that ends up being surrounded, just as Curio's was in Book 4. In both cases, compression turns into a fatal flaw instead of an invitation to break out, as it would with

[69] Dilke (1960) 119. Sklenář (2003) 118 notes the contradictions between this speech and his reply to Cicero, concluding that he abjures *virtus* in the latter while still using its rhetoric in the former, as the formulaic vocabulary shows.

[70] From a metapoetic standpoint, this is the goal of the entire epic up to this point; afterwards, the narrative similarly splinters, with Cato and Caesar fighting their own separate battles independent of each other.

Caesar. Instead of his proposal of overflow (*superfusis*), Pompey is hemmed in. Thus they cannot draw their swords for fear of wounding each other, and they lose any energy they might have started with: *frigidus inde / stat gladius* ("on this side the sword stands cold," 7.502-03). Even the overflow paradigm associated with Pompey comes down against him at this point. As lines 7.504-05 show (see Chapter 3), at this crucial moment Caesar decisively usurps the aquatic paradigm and uses it against Pompey.

With these lines, Lucan recapitulates and brings to fruition the paired similes of Caesar and Pompey at the beginning of Book 1. Pompey's men are just as passive and devoid of life as the dead oak. In fact, at the very moment of impact, the Pompeians are already decrepit (*ruinas*, 7.505). It is all the clearer now that Pompey was always doomed, since his attempt to harness aquatic power fails in that he does not exhibit the intimate connection and mastery of natural forces that Caesar has. Fate is likened to a raging flood, while *distulit* is certainly not favorable to Pompey here; this is the scattering that must happen before the fragments of the republican army can figure out how best to continue the struggle on their own.

The Dormant Brutus

In the midst of the carnage, Lucan devotes a small section to Brutus: *illic plebeia contectus casside vultus / ignotusque hosti quod ferrum, Brute, tenebas!* ("there, your face concealed by a plebeian helmet and unknown to the enemy, what a sword did you hold!" 7.586-87). Even though Brutus was present at Pharsalus (according to Plut. *Brutus* 5.1, Caesar even gave special orders for him not to be harmed if he resisted capture), disguising himself as a plebeian is an invention on Lucan's part, just as Cicero's

appearance was in the beginning of the book.[71] Brutus' inclusion here might seem like an unnecessary detail, but it is connected with broader themes in the epic. Not only does it allow the narrator to express hope in the midst of the greatest disaster to the republican cause that the republicans will be one day be avenged, but his description of Brutus is also a reiteration and further development of the hiding theme. Brutus behaves just as the senators at the beginning of Book 2 do in covering himself with plebeian garb; however, unlike for them, this is for him only a temporary expedient. In four years he will reveal his true republican sympathies and put an end to Caesar. In other words, the hiding motif blends into the Caesarian dormant phase, thus granting it immense potential. It is no coincidence that Lucan follows this brief passage on Brutus with a description of Domitius' death (7.599-616). The poet urges Brutus to do the opposite: *ne rue per medios nimium temerarius hostis* ("do not rush too rashly into the enemies' midst," 7.590). Domitius is an example of the old way of resisting Caesar—meeting force with force is futile, while Brutus adjusts his resistance to the conditions of Caesarian domination. This passage is thus is a small step in the transformation of a formerly shameful motif, that of concealment, into hope for the future.[72]

Pompey's Decisive Break

When the end finally comes for Pompey, Lucan makes sure he sees the entire disaster:

Iam Magnus transisse deos Romanaque fata

[71] Dilke (1960) 31.

[72] Unlike Leigh (1997) 103-09, I do not detect any bitterness or frustration in the apostrophe to Brutus, because it fits within the overall movement from concealment as a source of shame to concealment as a source of optimism of future vengeance and possibly restoration of *libertas*, as is shown by the narrator's eulogy to Pompey at the end of Book 8 and his apostrophe to Cato at 9.601-04.

> *senserat infelix, tota vix clade coactus*
> *fortunam damnare suam. stetit aggere campi,*
> *eminus unde omnis sparsas per Thessala rura*
> *aspiceret clades, quae bello obstante latebant.*
> *tot telis sua fata peti, sua corpora fusa*
> *ac se tam multo pereuntem sanguine vidit*. (7.647-53)
>
> Now unlucky Pompey had perceived that the gods and Rome's fate had changed; he was, with difficulty, forced by the whole disaster to curse his own fortune. He stood on a mound in the field, where he could view from afar the whole catastrophe spread out over the Thessalian countryside, which lay hidden when it was obstructed by war. He saw his own fate attacked by so many weapons, his own bodies laid low and himself expiring with so much blood.

Sua and *se* emphasize that he is losing part of himself here, and his impassioned speech does nothing to contradict this: *civiline parum est bello, si meque meosque / obruit?* ("is it not enough for civil war if it buries me and my men?" 7.663-64). However, based on what we have seen at the end of Book 5, what he loses here is only his public self, his role as general and as defender of republican *libertas*, both of which, as we have seen, he is not fit to play.[73] The crushing finality of the description therefore belies the actual relief of the situation, for *sua corpora* is not "really" his; his true self is more Cornelia than his troops. It is revealing that Lucan places him on higher ground (*aggere campi*) to see this clearly. This position of lofty detachment mirrors that of Sulla when he viewed the carnage from his wars (*intrepidus tanti sedit securus ab alto / spectator sceleris*, "fearless and carefree, he sits from on high, a viewer of such a great crime," 2.207-08). Pompey is no Sulla here, however, and for once this is an advantage: both are *securi*, but for Pompey this is a positive appellation because he can rid himself of his public identity

[73] Leigh (1997) 152-54 argues that Pompey should be practicing *devotio* here as a good republican general should; I think this is arguing for a far greater distortion of the historical facts than Lucan would have practiced, but he well notes that the reflexive adjectives and pronouns point to Pompey's "monarchical" perspective. On the other hand, I argue that the very fact that Pompey can view the dying as "his" bodies while he is still alive shows that his true self belongs in private life and obscurity.

with all its moral compromises: accusations of *regnum* or a return to Sullan/Caesarian brutality can now finally lie by the wayside. In a sense, Pompey's physical position high above the carnage also foreshadows the Olympian detachment at the beginning of Book 9 in which his *umbra* finds himself looking down upon all human endeavors.[74] In addition, Pompey finally finds himself being a spectator instead of the center of attention he has been all his life (as shown in his Book 1 character sketch and his dream at the beginning of Book 7), reinforcing his final break with public life. Thus Lucan can triumphantly declare that Pompey's departure from the scene paradoxically strengthens the republican cause. Instead of a temporary and physically uneven *par* in Pompey and Caesar, the fight is now eternal: *par quod semper habemus, / Libertas et Caesar* ("that pair which we will always have, liberty and Caesar," 7.695-96). Lucan pointedly writes that what is being rejected is *Pompei nomen populare* ("Pompey's popular name," 7.694), which recalls the *nomen* and *populares aurae* in Pompey's Book 1 character sketch. Both Pompey and the republicans can now go their separate ways: Pompey can now pass into obscurity as a *privatus*, while *libertas* itself is now free to be taken up by a worthier leader.

Thus the narrator's extended apostrophe:

> *iam pondere fati*
> *deposito securus abis; nunc tempora laeta*
> *respexisse vacat, spes numquam implenda recessit;*
> *quid fueris nunc scire licet.* (7.686-89)
>
> Now you depart carefree, having laid aside the weight of destiny; now you are free to look back on happy times, and hope, never to be fulfilled, has retreated; you can now know what you were.

[74] Cf. Aeneas' realization, with the help of Venus, that the gods are destroying Troy (*Aen.* 2.624ff); Aeneas had earlier climbed onto the roof of Priam's palace (*Aen.* 2.458), so he is also in the same position as Pompey. Obviously, whereas this marks the beginning of Aeneas' resolve to abandon Troy for a brighter future, Pompey's realization forces him to give up his future plans (which were doomed anyway, as they involved returning to his glorious past).

There can be no clearer indication that Pompey is shedding his public self, for *pondere* is an allusion to the *pondus* of the Pompeian oak at 1.139. He is rejecting the image of himself laid out by the poet in the Book 1 σύγκρισις. Interestingly, after this final break from his public role, Pompey is now truly free to indulge in daydreaming about his past glories without anxiety (*vacat*). Instead of the *securitas* of the sage, Pompey's is that of the detached bystander, such as of the Pompeians who surrendered to Caesar at Ilerda. Now his part in the civil war is over, as was theirs, and he can join them in observing from afar its carnage and *nefas* with equanimity.

13. Pompey in Book 8: New Beginnings?

Yet Book 8 reminds us that this new, detached Pompey is not yet a reality. As the events of this book show, his greatest flaw in this context is perhaps his failure to recognize that a return to glory is no longer possible for him: he still seeks to regenerate himself through the Parthians, and his journey to Egypt in this vein will bring about his death. If self-revival was already a remote possibility at the beginning of the epic, it is even more futile after Pharsalus. Lucan describes Pompey's hesitation thus:

> *Iam super Herculeas fauces nemorosaque Tempe*
> *Haemoniae deserta petens dispendia silvae*
> *cornipedem exhaustum cursu stimulisque negantem*
> *Magnus agens incerta fugae vestigia turbat*
> *implicitasque errore vias*. (8.1-5)
>
> And now past Hercules' chasm and wooded Tempe, seeking deserted roundabouts of the Haemonian forest, Magnus drives his steed, exhausted by the ride and neglectful of his spurs, and confounds the uncertain traces of his escape and his path entwined with wandering.

Dispendia seems out of place; one would think that Pompey would try to find a short-cut or *compendium* in order to escape Caesar's pursuit. On the other hand, Pompey's

strategy may be to linger in the thick woods so as to throw Caesar off his track. This would seem to be supported by *incerta fugae vestigia turbat*. However, Lucan does not specify whether Pompey goes the long way on purpose or not: *errore* can be either "wandering" (*OLD* 1a) or "error" (*OLD* 5), perhaps even "ambiguity" (*OLD* 2). The language is evocative and shadowy, like Pompey's own situation; perhaps it is best to interpret this description as programmatic of his entire trajectory in Book 8. For both his own plan to head for Parthia and Lentulus' advice to sail to Egypt will prove to be dead ends: the former would have led to a transformation into Sulla or Caesar, except wholly supported by barbarians, and the latter of course leads to his death. For the moment, even if Pompey wants to sink into obscurity, he cannot let go of his *fama* so quickly: *deserta sequentem* / *non patitur tutis fatum celare latebris* / *clara viri facies* ("the man's famous visage does not allow him, following deserted places, to conceal his fate in safe retreats," 8.12-14). This is an ironic inversion of the hiding motif: now when Pompey wants to disappear, he cannot. Thus concealment is prevented from turning into the Caesarian dormant state: Pompey cannot get the time in obscurity he needs in order to regenerate without danger from the outside.

Pompey and Cornelia Redux

Pompey's reunion with Cornelia starts on a grammatically ambiguous note:

> *tum puppe propinqua*
> *prosiluit crimenque deum crudele notavit,*
> *deformem pallore ducem vultusque prementem*
> *canitiem atque atro squalentis pulvere vestis*. (8.54-57)
>
> Then she leaped up as the ship drew near and noted the cruel fault of the gods, the leader befouled with paleness and the white hair pressing his face and his clothes filthy with black dust.

The usual rendering of *puppe propinqua / prosiluit* is to take *puppe* as an ablative absolute and *prosiluit* by itself, expressing Cornelia's sudden alertness at the arrival of Pompey's ship. However, the verb can also be taken with an ablative of separation, as Lucan does when describing Pompey's shade (*prosiluit busto*, "he leaped from the tomb," 9.3). For this reason, I suggest that in the absence of a clear sign until line 8.56 (*ducem*) as to who is doing the leaping, it would be grammatically possible for Pompey to be doing the jumping as well (*propinqua* is vague enough to allow for the possibility that the ship is close enough to land for such an action).[75]

Of course, we are quickly confirmed by *ducem*, but I suggest that this ambiguity is important because it briefly melds their figures into the same person, expressing grammatically what Pompey said of Cornelia in Book 5 and what he will say here: that she is part of his very being. And this being is on the threshold of death. Instead of only being the marks of labor and anxiety, *pallor* and *pulvis*, especially *ater*, can also signify death or the near presence of death. The most well-known example (and perhaps a model for Lucan here) is the visit of Hector's ghost to Aeneas: the fallen hero is described as *aterque cruento / pulvere* ("and black with bloody dust," *Aen.* 2.272-73), and his beard is *squalentem* ("filthy," 2.277).[76] For a brief moment, when Pompey's ship has not yet docked (*puppe propinqua*), Cornelia thinks she sees a ghost, or at least a figure between life and death. Or, if we look to Catullus 64 as a precedent, when Aegeus addresses Theseus before his voyage to slay the Minotaur: *canitiem terra atque infuso pulvere*

[75] Mayer (1981) 33 and Braund (1992) 154 both interpret the leap as Cornelia's; Bruère (1951) 226 takes it as Pompey's. For Lucan's probable literary model, Ovid describes Alcyone as *prosilit* (*Met.* 11.385).

[76] As Bruère (1951) 234 n.78 notices. Similarly, corpses in Ovid *Met.* 15.627 are *pallidaque exsangui squalebant corpora morbo* ("and pale bodies were filthy with bloodless disease").

foedans ("befouling his white hair with the earth and poured dust," 224), announcing his intent to befoul himself in preemptive grief if Theseus should not return. Thus, Pompey could also be grieving for the death of his public self (recall him seeing *sua corpora* killed on the battlefield). In any case, on seeing Pompey in this condition, Cornelia falls into her own deathlike state (8.58-61). Such a mutual relationship of both figures to death returns to the hiding motif that cast of death which it had in the opening books. In addition, it strengthens the association of Cornelia herself to death, as it is only through her eyes (*notavit*) that we see the physical toll that the defeat at Pharsalus has taken on Pompey (then again, taking into account the ambiguity of 8.54-55, *notavit* offers the tease that Pompey also sees a similar deathly visage on Cornelia). Perhaps shedding *sua corpora* was not so painless after all. If Pompey is to regenerate, he does so from a point of extremely low vitality indeed.

After Cornelia is revived, Pompey addresses her, emphasizing again his total divestment from a public identity: *vivit post proelia Magnus, / sed fortuna perit. quod defles, illud amasti?* ("Magnus lives after the battle, but his fortune is dead. Did you love that which you bewail?" 8.84-85). Yet the Mytilenian throng that has gathered to witness his arrival is not about to let him arrive so quietly: *fac, Magne, locum, quem cuncta revisant / saecula, quem veniens hospes Romanus adoret* ("Magnus, make this a place which all ages may visit, which the Roman guest may worship when he comes," 8.114-15). As Lucan said above, true hiding will be impossible for Pompey, and thus a truly successful *fuga*: in this respect he proves inferior to the Nile, whose *caput*, through the aid of Acoreus, truly manages to remain out of Caesar's sight and mind. In fact, the Mytilenians seem almost to be trying to make their island a sort of *monumentum* to

Pompey; Lucan will develop this theme to a rhetorical height at the end of the book (8.820-22 and 8.851ff), and it will continue, as we saw, in the merging of Pompey's *vestigia* with the ruins of Troy. In gratitude, Pompey declares to the Mytilenians that this island is virtually his second home: *hic sacra domus carique penates, / hic mihi Roma fuit* ("here was my sacred home and dear household gods, here was my Rome," 8.132-33). As seen in the beginning of Book 7, Pompey's relationship to Rome is so intensely personal as to amount to a love affair; it would be no great leap for the converse—expressing his love for Cornelia in terms of his love for Rome—to hold true as well.[77] His defeat at Pharsalus allows this love to be detached from Rome and reside wholly in his wife, a good thing since, while he was head of the republican forces, there was always the danger that he loved Rome for the sake of his own *fama* rather than for upholding any sort of principle such as *libertas*. Hence, it is no surprise that one of Pompey's men resents Cato for prolonging civil war, because his loyalty was to Pompey alone (9.232-33) and not to an abstraction. What held true for the commander is good enough for the soldier. By losing, Pompey's dangerous love for Rome can thus be "hidden" away just as Cornelia was, allowing him to fade into oblivion while Cato takes up the reins as a true standard-bearer of *libertas*.

[77] Ahl (1976) 177, who thus notes his inability to love Rome in the abstract, unlike Cato.

Pompey's Parthian Decision: A Fate Averted

Yet Pompey's fate is not to remain hidden: *fata mihi totum mea sunt agitanda per orbem* ("I must drive my fate through the entire world," 8.138).[78] In so fleeing, however, his forces naturally regenerate themselves: *sparsus ab Emathia fugit quicumque procella, / assequitur Magnum* ("whoever fled, scattered by the Emathian storm, accompanies Magnus," 8.203-04). This leads him back to his old habits:

> *iubet ire in devia mundi*
> *Deiotarum, qui sparsa ducis vestigia legit.*
> *"quando" ait "Emathiis amissus cladibus orbis,*
> *qua Romanus erat, superest, fidissime regum,*
> *Eoam temptare fidem populosque bibentis*
> *Euphraten et adhuc securum a Caesare Tigrim.*
> *ne pigeat Magno quaerentem fata remotas*
> *Medorum penetrare domos Scythicosque recessus…* (8.209-16)
>
> He orders Deiotarus, who tracked his leader's scattered trails, to go into the margins of the world. He says, "Since the world, as far as it was Roman, was lost in the Emathian disaster, it remains, most faithful of kings, to probe the trust of the East, the peoples drinking the Euphrates, and Tigris yet safe from Caesar. Do not be reluctant, as you seek a destiny for Magnus, to penetrate the home of the Medes and the retreats of Scythia…

Pompey is repeating the actions he took at 2.632ff and 3.229 (note *recessus*): he again requests aid from barbarian kingdoms on the eastern edge of the world, and again these peoples are represented by their mighty rivers that are described as potential conquests for Caesar (*securum a Caesare Tigrim*). He is trying to repeat the arc of a formulaic cycle that was unsuccessful the first time; it would almost be funny if it were not so

[78] Sklenář (2003) 121 sees Pompey's decision as akin to the Stoic *sapiens*' desire to understand his position in the universe, a position with which I do not agree. It seems clear that Pompey is talking about regaining his temporal power, not greater knowledge of the cosmos or of himself.

tragic.[79] However, because he has lost the Roman part of the world, a putative recovery would be even more barbarian.[80] Pompey is unwittingly being "engulfed" more and more by the east; even the messenger is barbarian (the Galatian king Deiotarus) instead of his son Gnaeus in Book 2. This is yet another step along the path of total assimilation by the east when his *caput* is subsumed by the Nile's in Book 10.

Yet in trying to enlist easterners, Pompey cannot help but become more like them. His message to the Parthian king includes the boast that *Phoebi surgentis ab igne / iam propior quam Persis eram* ("I was then nearer than the Persian to the fire of rising Phoebus," 8.228-29), an expression of transgression and straining after the limits of the world that would do his namesake Alexander proud. And in the passage quoted above, *penetrare domos* sounds a note of aggression at odds with his desperate situation (bolstered by the haughty *tamen omnia vincens / sustinui nostris vos tantum desse triumphis*, "yet in conquering all I endured that you alone were absent from our triumphs," 8.229-30). His imperious tone seems at odds with the substance of his speech, whose purpose is after all the request of a favor from the Parthians. It seems that Pompey has not shed his public role yet, nor with it his love for *fama*. Finally, he closes the speech with a shocking and frankly traitorous utterance: *Pompeio vincite, Parthi, / vinci Roma volet* ("Conquer for Pompey, Parthians; Rome will wish to be conquered," 8.237-38). This speech only confirms that a resurgent Pompey would be, if anything, worse

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[79] Ahl (1976) 170 is being somewhat harsh when he calls this course of action "madness," as Pompey is acting in his self-interest here, but it does, as he says, sever his cause from that of Rome. Thus he rightly criticizes Marti's (1945) article for not taking this into account; in this he is joined by Rambaud (1955) and Syndikus (1958) 101-08.

[80] Pogorzelski (2011) 159-60 notes the importance of this shift in geographical understanding, which contradicts earlier claims by both Pompey (3.296-97) and Caesar (7.264-65) that the entire world was at stake at Pharsalus. For Roman relations with the Parthian Empire, see Colledge (1967), Ball (2000) *passim*, and Curtis and Stewart (2007) 50-87.

than he was pre-Pharsalus: he would be completely immersed in barbarian and despotic modes of behavior, and his breakthrough and flooding over Rome would totally consist of barbarian troops (even outdoing Caesar, whose Gallic hordes never did sweep down into Rome despite the fears of the Romans).[81] It is thus absolutely imperative that he not be allowed to have a second chance at temporal power in order for the redemption of his reputation at the end of Book 8 to succeed.

Pompey's speech to the republican remnants at Syhedra is packed with formulaic language.[82] *Rebusque novis exordia quaeram* ("and I will seek a beginning for new affairs," 8.265) is only the beginning. Pompey soon grows bolder: *nec sic mea fata prementur / ut nequeam relevare caput cladesque receptas / excutere* ("nor is my fate so hard-pressed that I cannot rear my head and shake off the disasters I have incurred," 8.267-69). Twice Lucan describes Marius in terms of a rearing or hidden head—his ghost at 1.582 and as an exile at 2.70. The allusion is clear enough that Pompey's actual reference to Marius in the following lines (8.269-71) is almost superfluous. He then uses plainly Caesarian language: *sparsit potius Pharsalia nostras / quam subvertit opes* ("Pharsalia has scattered rather than demolished our resources," 8.273-74) expresses his faith that he can rebound according to the cycle and reverse the continuous dissipation of his forces.[83] Again, he takes his status as *profugus* (8.259) as but a lengthy prelude to regeneration and return, and his hiding to be merely temporary. However, he soon

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[81] Lintott (1971) 501-02. Though Ahl (1976) 161 n.28 may be technically correct when he states that Pompey no longer has Sullan *saevitia*, Pompey's Book 8 plans, if successful, would have made him into another Sulla.

[82] Marti (1945) 372 acknowledges this meeting as a step backwards from her argument that Pompey proceeds on a straightforward path to becoming a Stoic *proficiens*, but does not treat the episode in detail. Sklenář (2003) 123 views the meeting, along with Lentulus' rebuttal, as Pompey's final failure to gain wisdom and virtue.

[83] Ahl (1976) 171 notes Pompey's willingness to become Caesarian here.

touches on the fatal weakness in his would-be Caesarian behavior: *sed me vel sola tueri / fama potest rerum toto quas gessimus orbe / et nomen quod mundus amat* ("but even the renown alone of the deeds we have accomplished in the whole world can protect me, and my name beloved by the world," 8.274-76). As Lucan mused at the beginning of Book 8, Pompey's *nomen* is far too famous for him to hide for long; therefore, he cannot follow the Caesarian cycle, which requires complete dormancy in order to regenerate. Unlike Brutus, Pompey cannot truly be obscure enough to guarantee his own safety from Caesar, which would thus give him the needed time to regroup. Indeed, one can say that it is his name that brings about his death at Egypt, for he is far too valuable a prize to be let in and out without consideration.

After rejecting Egypt and Libya as places of refuge (Pompey cites Juba's kinship with Hannibal at 8.284-87; this rejection is problematic due to his aid in vanquishing Curio), he settles on the Parthians.[84] Once again, he depicts the east with his two favorite motifs—rivers and hiding places: *dividit Euphrates ingentem gurgite mundum / Caspiaque immensos seducunt claustra recessus* ("Euphrates divides a vast world with its flow and the Caspian barriers separate enormous retreats," 8.290-91). However, even though he is not openly haughty as he was in his private missive to Deiotarus, there is still a subtle difference between his conceptualization of both elements here and earlier in Book 2: instead of a force to be awakened, the Euphrates is now a barrier to be crossed.[85] In effect, it becomes another Rubicon for him (most fitting in light of his Caesarian echo below), but the difference in resources between Caesar then and Pompey now is so vast

[84] Ahl (1976) 171 notes that Pompey does not mention his dispatch of Deiotarus to Parthia, thus demonstrating a degree of duplicity.

[85] Pogorzelski (2011) 161 notes the emphasis on the river as a barrier dividing the Roman world from a cosmologically alien one (as Pompey describes at 8.292-94).

as to make this reconceptualization almost absurd. However, Pompey soon returns to his original image of the east: *effundam populos alia tellure revulsos* ("I will pour forth the peoples wrenched from another land," 8.309). Here he portrays the Parthians as a flood, as though they embodied the Euphrates or another eastern river. Pompey is thus trying to conceal his journey to Parthia and his reliance on barbarian forces with the trappings of an invasion, however ludicrous it may be.

The last section of his speech shows Pompey's choices in stark contrast. First, Pompey drifts into an almost wistful mood as he speculates on what a lack of assistance from any nation would entail: *vulgati supra commercia mundi / naufragium Fortuna ferat* ("may Fortune carry this shipwreck beyond the communication of the broadly known world," 8.312-13). *Naufragium* is important here: his forces, shattered at Pharsalus, would remain without hope of regeneration as they drift ever farther into the edges of the world. In other words, permanent hiding (*orbe iacens alio*, "lying in another sphere," 8.315), but presumably sharing his love with Cornelia in their mutual obscurity. On the other hand, Lucan deliberately has Pompey echo Caesar's proclamation before the Rubicon (1.200) in *Roma, fave coeptis* ("Rome, favor my undertaking," 8.322) to show that there will be no second beginning for Pompey, and indeed that the epic will not repeat itself with another river crossing.[86] The reason for such a difference in outcome is that Pompey is looking toward the past (8.316-21); he chooses the east because his

[86] Zwierlein (1986) 473 n.38 argues that Pompey uses *fave coeptis* with justification because if he succeeds in enlisting the Parthians and then doing battle with Caesar, either Caesar or the Parthians will be defeated—both outcomes favorable for Rome. However, if Caesar wins, nothing changes; if Pompey wins, however, based on what has been described of him earlier in the epic (e.g. in Caesar's Book 1 speech and the rumors of his army at the beginning of Book 7), he may approach, if not match, Caesar in autocratic tendency. Worse still, a Pompeian victory would almost certainly result in Parthian troops stationed at Rome (which would thus figuratively be conquered by its most formidable enemy) and also realize earlier comparisons of Pompey to an eastern despot (such as the simile at 3.284-90 comparing him to Cyrus or Xerxes).

nomen was most celebrated there. But because his past glory is irretrievable, a plan that tries to regain the achievements of this past is doomed.

Lentulus' Speech against Pompey

However, before an audience of senators, it is no surprise that Pompey's plans do not find approval. The basic irony of Lentulus' rebuttal is that, in pushing back against Pompey's formulaic drive to the east, he ends up leading him to his death. However, in light of the barbarian-infused despot that Pompey would become upon being fully formulaic, this is a service to his reputation. Thus, Lentulus accuses him of being a *transfuga mundi* ("fugitive from the world," 8.335).[87] In contrast to Pompey's formulaic stance on seeking aid from the Parthians, Lentulus views the trip in terms of morality: *quid vulnera nostra / in Scythicos spargis populos cladesque latentes?* ("why do you scatter our wounds and our hidden disasters among the Scythian peoples?" 8.352-53). This is the language of the poet at 6.60-63; for a republican such as Lentulus, Pompey is spreading the bloody overflow of civil war, which should be kept contained; *latentes* links to the hiding motif, since as losers they are marked out by shame. Taking his cue from Pompey's depiction of the journey as crossing a barrier, Lentulus argues that this would break the boundary separating Roman from barbarian: *quid Parthos transire doces?* ("why do you teach the Parthians how to cross over?" 8.354).

With that, Lentulus launches on a lengthy ethnographical description of the Parthians that is also heavily polemical, his goal being to depict them as inferior to the Romans in every aspect of warfare. They are a people of the east, hence soft (8.365-66),

[87] Pogorzelski (2011) 162 notes that Lentulus also speaks of Parthia in geographically alien terms at 8.336-38.

unlike the hard Romans. Yet as he keeps cataloguing their behavior, we begin to see a deeper affinity with Pompey. Just like him (or at least as he wishes to be), they are experts at retreat and withdrawal, such that no enemy can chase them down: *nulli superabilis hosti est / libertate fugae* ("no enemy can vanquish him because of his freedom of flight," 8.370-71; note the sardonic reference to *libertas*; this is the only liberty allowed Pompey in a Caesarian world). Not only are they similar to Pompey, but they are also manifestly unlike Caesar: *nec franget nando violenti verticis amnem* ("nor will he break a river's violent eddy by swimming," 8.375).

In fact, even their garments flow like water (*illic et laxas vestes et fluxa virorum / velamenta vides*, "there also you see loose clothing and men's flowing vestments," 8.367-68), revealing their deep affinity to this element; their whole method of fighting is to be fluid and to shun frontal assaults. Thus, they do not utilize siege equipment (8.378-80). *Pugna levis bellumque fugax turmaeque vagantes* ("capricious battle and warfare as flight and wandering squadrons," 8.380) aptly sums up the Parthian way of war. It is as un-Roman a style of fighting as one can imagine, which raises problems for Pompey's utilization of them. On the one hand, Lentulus' description once again shows Pompey's affinity with watery movement, here embodied in the Parthians' fluid tactics, yet their lack of breakthrough potential would prevent him using them in a Caesarian frontal assault. It seems that, contrary to Pompey's objectives, seeking help from the Parthians would only accelerate his natural tendencies to flight, entrapping him in a world of endless meandering. There is no chance that he could actually take back Rome with these embodiments of indirectness.

In the conclusion to his harangue, Lentulus directs Pompey's attention to an imaginary tour of Parthia itself. He envisions Crassus' shade greeting his entrance with a complaint for not taking revenge on his killers first (*umbra senis maesti*, "shade of the gloomy old man," 8.432 again ironically foreshadows Pompey's death; as Lucan says in the beginning of Book 10, his shade will also need an avenger in Caesar). He continues thus:

> *tum plurima cladis*
> *occurrent monimenta tibi: quae moenia trunci*
> *lustrarunt cervice duces, ubi nomina tanta*
> *obruit Euphrates et nostra cadavera Tigris*
> *detulit in terras ac reddidit*. (8.435-39)
>
> Then you will meet with numerous reminders of catastrophe: what walls our beheaded leaders travelled around, where the Euphrates buries such great names and the Tigris brought our corpses down into earth and returned them.

While the severed heads adorning the city walls also foreshadow Pompey's fate, it is his final sentiments that are most pregnant with thematic connections. The Euphrates and Tigris, both rivers that got special mention in Pompey's Book 3 troop catalogue, now figure as menacing representatives of Parthia and as complicit in the slaughter of Romans. They swallow Roman corpses and vomit them out again like the bloodstained Tiber in Book 2, while *nomina tanta / obruit* is a subtle warning against Pompey's own downfall and loss of *nomen* (alluded to earlier in Lentulus' vision of an ignominious grave). In Lentulus' eyes, Pompey's epic-long quest to seek aid from the east threatens to engulf him in *nefas*. These rivers symbolized the eastern resources that Pompey wished to use for his own ends, but with the climactic battle lost, Lentulus reveals that it is Pompey who will "disappear" into them like Crassus' men.

However, Lentulus' speech is finally fatally compromised by his advice to Pompey to sail for Egypt. He paints it in favorable colors: *terra suis contenta bonis, non indiga mercis* ("a land content with its own goods, not needy for trade," 8.446). It is self-sufficient and has no need for commerce.[88] However, we know from Book 10 that it is just as transgressive as Parthia, if not more so. In addition, he makes the miscalculation that Ptolemy's youth will mean a better reception for Pompey (8.452-53). Judging by their experience in deviousness and tyranny, Egypt is much "older" (i.e., further along the road to decadence) than any other realm in the Mediterranean. Hence, when Lentulus asks *quis nominis umbram / horreat?* ("who would dread the shade of a name?" 8.449-50), Lucan is not only making a sly joke at his expense, since Pompey is the true *nominis umbra*, but at the same time he is also subtly equating Ptolemy and Pompey. Although different in age, both are no more than shadows without a true hold on power. And so Pompey succumbs to Lentulus' advice and sails off both to his doom and to everlasting glory.[89]

Pompey's Final Moments

Lucan has presented enough evidence to suggest that Pompey's regeneration would not bode well either for Rome or for his own reputation. His death thus presents the opportunity for the narrator to clear his name, or in other words, essentially to rewrite

[88] Mayer (1981) 446, who notes that this comment is not a sign of moral superiority; as Book 10 will show, exactly the opposite is true. Egypt was already known for its wealth in Homeric times (see *Il.* 9.379-86 and *Od.* 4); see also Vasunia (2001) 23 and Moyer (2011) 53-55.

[89] Ahl (1976) 1773 well observes the magnitude between Pompey's grandiose, Caesarian plans and his submission to Lentulus' advice without so much as a word of complaint, thus demonstrating the chasm between his desires and his actual powers.

Pompey's history in order to form a proper legacy.[90] Thus, Pompey must moderate his behavior carefully: *sed cedit fatis classemque relinquere iussus / obsequitur, letumque iuvat praeferre timori* ("but he yielded to fate and obeys the order to abandon his ship, and it pleases him to prefer death to fear," 8.575-76).[91] Gone are his autocratic pretensions, but as we will see, not his love of *fama*.

The opening stage of this transformation begins with Pompey himself when he faces the first blows from his killers:

> *iam venerat horae*
> *terminus extremae, Phariamque ablatus in alnum*
> *perdiderat iam iura sui. tum stringere ferrum*
> *regia monstra parant. ut vidit comminus ensis,*
> *involvit vultus atque indignatus apertum*
> *Fortunae praebere caput; tum lumina pressit*
> *continuitque animam, ne quas effundere voces*
> *vellet et aeternam fletu corrumpere famam.* (8.610-17)
>
> Now the limit of his uttermost hour had come, and, carried away into the Pharian boat, he lost control over himself. Then the royal abominations prepare to draw their steel. As he saw the swords up close, he enveloped his face and disdained to offer Fortune an unconvered head; then he pressed shut his eyes and repressed his breathing lest he emit any sound and corrupt his eternal fame with weeping.

Perdiderat iam iura sui is poignant, but also deliberately ironic: Pompey may be losing control of what happens to him, but by meticulously controlling the reaction to his own murder, he is actually reasserting authority over his own body.[92] Instead of making noise, he resolutely stops up his breath (*anima*), shuts his eyes, and keeps his body perfectly still—all while being hacked to pieces.

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[90] Lintott (1971) 502.

[91] Contrast Plutarch's more realistic depiction of his death at *Pomp.* 78-79; in addition, the verses of Sophocles quoted by Pompey indicate his realization and acceptance of his imminent slavery, in contrast to Lucan's portrayal of inner freedom.

[92] Mayer (1981) 157; see also Malamud (2003) 33.

However, his actions are also charged with symbolic force: *animam* is not only his breath, but also his soul. Pompey is keeping it under tight control here, as if in preparation for the narrator's unleashing of it throughout the world. In other words, Pompey, who almost succeeded at a formulaic outburst in Book 6, is now preparing a sort of dormancy of his own before it bursts out into the open at the end of the book.

Pompey's self-suppression also has Stoic correlations. Seneca writes that the wise man in solitude should behave like Jupiter at the end of the world:

> *"Qualis tamen futura est vita sapientis, si sine amicis relinquatur in custodiam coniectus vel in aliqua gente aliena destitutus vel in navigatione longa retentus aut in desertum litus eiectus?" Qualis est Iovis, cum resoluto mundo et dis in unum confusis paulisper cessante natura acquiescit sibi cogitationibus suis traditus. Tale quiddam sapiens facit: in se reconditur, secum est.* (*Ep*. 9.16)
>
> "Yet what sort of life would the wise man have, if he is left without friends if thrown into prison, or deserted among some alien tribe, or detained on a long ocean voyage, or cast onto a lonely shore?" The kind that Jupiter has when, after the world is dissolved and the gods melded into one and nature ceases to function a little while, he reposes in himself, abandoned to his own meditations. The wise man does something of the sort: he is buried within himself, he is with himself.

Now among other things, this is a rich passage for comparison with the formula in general, for Jupiter is behaving like the Caesarian core. His retracting into himself is much like the Caesarian thunderbolt's withdrawal into its cloud: both await the beginning of their next respective cycles. As for Pompey, the Senecan passage suggests that, just like the *sapiens* and Jupiter, he should also be able to release his *anima* or mind at some point. But how is this possible, given his imminent death? The end of the book will show that it is the narrator who enables the release of his spirit throughout the world. For now, what Pompey can do by himself is to detach his spirit from his body and thus observe it as if it were a foreign object:

> *sed, postquam mucrone latus funestus Achillas*
> *perfodit, nullo gemitu consensit ad ictum*
> *respexitque nefas, servatque immobile corpus,*
> *seque probat moriens atque haec in pectore volvit…* (8.618-21)
>
> But after deadly Achillas pierced his side with the dagger, without any groaning he agrees to the stroke and does not heed the crime, and keeps his body still, and tests himself in dying and ponders the following in his heart…

How is it possible for a man to look upon his own assassination? The negative is generally assumed to carry over to the first *–que* of *respexit*, thus rendering the meaning of the verb as "heed" (*OLD* 7).[93] However, I suggest that a pure reading of *–que* also makes sense in light of Pompey's detachment from his own body. This makes him almost a spectator of himself (he will in fact project this attitude of gazing on to his own family), and moral or ethical approval (*seque probat moriens*) only comes from viewing himself as a worthy *exemplum*. Thus, *respexit* has the sense of directly "looking" at his own body, even though he has already shut his eyes.[94] I will explain this apparent impossibility below, since it becomes clear only with an analysis of his speech. In the same fashion, *probat* does not just mean "test" here (*OLD* 5) but also "approve," as if watching himself from afar.[95]

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[93] Mayer (1981) 157.

[94] The fact that *respicio* can have the sense of regarding past events (*OLD* 5) is especially suggestive here, since nostalgia is one of Pompey's defining traits. In a sense, he has already left the constraints of his mortal flesh behind, even while in the process of dying.

[95] Mayer (1981) 158 on the standard rendering of *probat*. Seneca often stresses the importance of spectatorship in realizing the full effect of moral *exempla*: e.g., *De Prov.* 2.9 and 2.11, where Seneca describes Cato's struggle with fate as a *spectaculum*. Lucan perverts this principle in the *BC* by having characters wish for an audience for their *crimina*, such as Scaeva at 6.158-60.

Pompey's Silent Speech: Hiddenness Transfigured

Lucan carefully composes the above in order to prepare for Pompey's grand pronouncement:

> *saecula Romanos numquam tacitura labores*
> *attendunt, aevumque sequens speculatur ab omni*
> *orbe ratem Phariamque fidem: nunc consule famae.* (8.622-24)
>
> Future generations never to be silent about Roman labors are watching, and a coming age is gazing from the entire world at this boat and Pharian loyalty: now consider your reputation.

As we have seen, a crucial behavioral trait that distinguishes Caesar's opponents is their tendency to complain silently; in fact, they are branded as losers in their inability to express openly their complaint about his new order. However, Pompey's last words are no lament, but an optimistic, even triumphant, anticipation of the implications that his death will have for the future (and which undo his earlier Stoic pretensions).[96] Lucan is thus changing the signification of silence: hitherto a mark of the vanquished, it now becomes the vehicle or medium of eternal fame, for Pompey's silence here in a way brings about the eternal non-silence (*numquam tacitura*) of future ages. Paradoxically, this happens because Pompey's withdrawal into himself is at the same time an extension of his voice out into eternity. By declaring that *saecula* and *aevum* will not just be watching in the future, but are actually watching at this very moment (*sequens* and present tense *speculatur* juxtaposed), he effectively fuses his own inner voice with that of posterity, creating a disembodied, detached, serene version of himself looking down upon the flesh-and-blood man.[97] Thus, the literal rendering of *respexit* brings out the sense of

[96] Sklenář (2003) 125.

[97] Mayer (1981) 158 notes the sense of posterity as a living presence. Malamud (2003) 34 sums up nicely the dual nature of Pompey here as both actor and spectator; she sees such theatricality as a mark of

self-spectacle. Also, Pompey not only projects himself out into infinite time, but also infinite space.[98] This, too, is the climax of the earlier motif of Pompey's affinity for amphitheatrical audiences. It is not a complete reversal as the silence motif was, but is nevertheless a spectacular transformation: no longer does he need a physical audience in his own theater, but now has all of unborn posterity from the entire world as his audience. *Fama*, such a handicap to Pompey due to its focus on the past, now has no limits. Such temporal and physical expansion in spirit looks ahead to the narrator's depiction of Pompey's *umbra* as limitless: Pompey in effect is taking the first step in a process of metamorphosis that will be completed by the narrator.[99]

Not only does Pompey mentally reach out to posterity, but his speech in a sense also merges with the narrative voice in that it introduces the basic theme of unlimited space and *fama*, thus preparing the reader for the eulogy at the end of Book 8. His silent speech can be seen as the climax to the manifest artificiality of this scene, beginning from *cedit fatis*. Lucan has consciously, deliberately been setting up Pompey's full awareness of his death so that he can prepare himself meticulously both in body and mind. Thus, Pompey's emphasis on keeping his *anima* tightly restrained is preparation for the narrator's verbally releasing his *umbra* throughout the world.

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instability in Pompey's character as he imitates Cato in word and clothing. This may be true, but of the various competing "versions" of Pompey that spring up after his death, it is the narrator's that dominates by the end of the epic.

[98] Mayer (1981) 158 comments that "*numquam* and *omni orbe* are comprehensive and admit of no exceptions in time or space."

[99] Ormand (1994) 48-49 on the other hand sees Pompey's inner exultation as a betrayal of his Stoic composure as described at 8.663-68; I cannot agree with this view, since it denies any broader significance to Pompey's death and ignores the importance of the narrator's eulogy at the end of the book.

However, Pompey's high-mindedness in this speech also marks an irrevocable separation between his outlook and Cornelia's. He conflates his wife and his son's attitude with that of posterity: if they can watch his death like his imaginary future audience, then they are truly his loved ones: *si mirantur, amant* ("if they marvel, they love me," 8.635).[100] However, he is mistaken: even before the slaughter begins, Lucan makes it clear that Cornelia is at best lukewarm about the situation: *attonitoque metu nec quoquam avertere visus / nec Magnum spectare potest* ("and with stunned fear she can neither turn her gaze anywhere, nor can she watch Magnus," 8.591-92), and he concludes the scene by repeating her ambivalence: *at non tam patiens Cornelia cernere saevum, / quam perferre, nefas* ("but Cornelia did not so much suffer to behold the savage crime as to endure it," 8.637-38).[101] As Mayer notes, this is because Pompey's stance at the moment of his death does not require love as much as "open marveling."[102] Since Cornelia relates to Pompey only on a private level, she cannot join him as part of his invisible public audience. Thus, when she apostrophizes Pompey's killer with *nescis, crudelis, ubi ipsa / viscera sint Magni* ("cruel one, you do not know where Magnus' vitals are," 8.644-45), the "true guts" she refers to are herself, for as she explains in lines 8.646-47, Pompey would suffer more by seeing herself murdered than he does now. In other words, Cornelia is still clinging to the Pompey that was indissolubly bonded to herself after his defeat, who is not the same as the figure here lost in thought of eternal fame. Thus, after death, she will claim her "piece" of Pompey as underworld shade and

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[100] Sklenář (2003) 126 aptly sums up Pompey's death scene by saying that while he acts the part of the Stoic, he does not truly practice inner tranquility.

[101] Ahl (1976) 182 misses this disjunction between Pompey's and Cornelia's perspectives at this crucial moment.

[102] Mayer (1981) 159.

everything associated with death and looking backwards, not the narrator's triumphant *umbra*, which occupies Cato and Brutus. Thus, Pompey's death allows him finally to break the mode of *fuga* that would have seen him fade into obscurity with Cornelia; it enables him to gain the eternal *fama* he has been craving since the beginning of the epic, but saves him from being turned into a "barbarian Caesar," a result which his plans in Book 8 would have caused.

Finally, Pompey's *Nachleben* has already begun in his mind, but there still remains the issue of his body. Lucan almost playfully continues the engulfing of Pompey by water: *truncusque vadosis / huc illuc iactatur aquis* ("and his trunk is tossed hither and thither by the shallow waters," 8.698-99), and even describes Pompey as *ludibrium pelagi* ("a plaything of the sea," 8.710). The element over which he wished to utilize to his own ends is now "enfolding" him into itself; this process leads directly into the Nile's *caput* as being an extension or continuation of his own, as Caesar seeks to possess it as well.

The Narrator's Eulogy: Pompeian Formulaic Apotheosis

The stage is now set for one of the epic's most powerful rhetorical set pieces, which is necessary to counter the shameful reality of Pompey's burial:

> *temeraria dextra,*
> *cur obicis Magno tumulum manesque vagantis*
> *includis? situs est qua terra extrema refuso*
> *pendet in Oceano; Romanum nomen et omne*
> *imperium Magno tumuli est modus: obrue saxa*
> *crimine plena deum.* (8.795-800)
>
> Heedless hand, why do you block Magnus with a tomb and enclose his wandering shade? He is buried where farthest land floats on Ocean as it

> flows black; his tomb's boundary is the Roman name and all her empire:
> cover up these rocks that are full of the gods' blame.

Now Cordus, the figure apostrophized here, had been a shadowy figure who was able to prevent Pompey's corpse from being washed out to sea and who subsequently performed his cremation and burial.[103] However, the fact that Lucan brackets his appearance with *latebrae* at 8.715 and 8.780 speaks volumes: Cordus is emphatically one of the vanquished, and the aura of shame that surrounds him and his work must be countered by a lofty spiritual flight. The narrator thus rejects Cordus' ostensible act of *pietas* by depicting Pompey's makeshift tomb as a sort of container blocking his *manes* from roaming at will. As such, this eulogy at the end of Book 8 is the culmination of the narrator's pro-Pompeian stance in the epic. As Mayer notes, wandering shades were normally considered to be troubled.[104] However, Lucan may be drawing on the all-pervading Stoic *pneuma* here (see *SVF* 2.1027), though in a tendentious manner, for Pompey's *umbra* does not permeate every entity (most obviously, it does not penetrate Caesar).[105] Most immediately relevant, however, is that Lucan endows the *umbra* with the qualities of rivers: just as they strain to overflow their banks and spread, so Pompey's *umbra* should be given free range to roam as well. Instead of his body being swallowed up by water, his shade has taken on its characteristics: this is the final stage of Pompey's

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[103] For the character of Cordus, see Brennan (1969), who suggests a connection with the pro-Pompeian historian Cremutius Cordus. At Plut. *Pomp.* 80, Pompey's freedman Philippus is assisted by an unnamed γέρων who is one of Pompey's former comrades-in-arms.

[104] Mayer (1981) 180.

[105] See also Manilius 2.60-61: *namque canam tacita naturae mente potentem* / *infusumque deum caelo terrisque fretoque* ("For I will sing of a god, powerful due to nature's silent mind, spread out over the earth, the heavens and the ocean") and continuing at 2.64-65 (*cum spiritus unus* / *per cunctas habitet partes atque irriget orbem*, "when one spirit dwells throughout all regions and inundates the world"). Interestingly, *infusum* and *irriget* already suggest an aquatic element to the Stoic deity, just as Lucan draws on fluvial behavior for Pompey's *umbra*. For Manilius' influence on Lucan generally, see Schwemmler (1916).

"metamorphosis." His shade is even similar to that of the Nile in that both are spread through rhetoric: Acoreus is the channel through which the Nile flows, while the spread of Pompey's *umbra* through the narrator's voice makes of it a true *nomen*, a redemption (or regeneration) of sorts from the negative *magni nominis umbra* at the beginning of the epic.

Also, even though Egypt is not quite the margin of the world, the location of the tomb next to the sea (where Pompey's body was almost swept away) gives Lucan the opportunity to designate it as a lonely marker on the edge of the world (*terra extrema*); in addition, it is after all the endpoint of Pompey's centrifugal flight from Rome. From this distant corner, Pompey's shade will spread triumphantly over the entire world.

Thus, in death, Pompey's shade has finally been able to harness the power of those rivers that in life he wished to utilize (as well as, arguably, the fluidity of the Parthians).[106] It is only a short step from here to the Nile fighting Caesar with the power of its overflow. In fact, Lucan practically makes the connection: *erremus populi cinerumque tuorum, / Magne, metu nullas Nili calcemus harenas* ("let us the peoples be mistaken and tread on none of Nile's sands for fear of your ashes, Magnus," 8.804-05). If Pompey's shade is to dominate Egypt, he will be part of everything in it, including the Nile.[107] Granted, the crucial element missing from the overflow of Pompey's *umbra* is the dynamic of resistance leading to the gathering of energy: even when it does break free at the beginning of Book 9, it is not described with formulaic words (*at non in Pharia*

[106] Cf. Hardie (2002) 256, who sees Pompey undergoing an Ovidian metamorphosis in that Pompey's *umbra* effectively displaces his body and the full glory of his *nomen* can only be achieved by separating the body from the name through death.

[107] In order to punish Egypt, the narrator does envision at 8.828-30 the Nile withdrawing into its source, causing the country to dry up into desert. While at no time does the narrator openly praise the Nile, he never condemns it like he does the rest of Egypt, and the imagined threat here may actually bring the Nile closer to Pompey, as the river is now the agent of punishing its own land for Pompey's death.

manes iacuere favilla / nec cinis exiguus tantam compescuit umbram; / prosiluit busto, "but his ghost did not lie in Pharian embers, nor did the scanty ash restrain such a great shade; it leaped forth from the tomb," 9.1-3). Of course, it would be illogical to expect an incorporeal shade to behave in this manner, but these lines show that Pompey's *umbra* cannot resist directly, but only through the "medium" of Brutus and Cato (9.17-18). Yet Cato will describe the Stoic Jupiter in a manner that closely recalls the spreading nature of Pompey's shade. The striking similarity between these two cases first of all strengthens the case for Lucan's Stoic inspiration here, but also argues for spiritual spreading as a general model of resistance. Since Domitius at Corfinium, Lucan has hinted at rivers' potential in stopping the relentless advance of Caesar. Only after the republican cause is effectively finished off, however, can they actually make use of this model.

The narrator looks back and lists Pompey's military achievements (8.806-15), but he triumphantly associates them with his overflowing *umbra*: *quis capit haec tumulus?* ("what tomb contains them?" 8.816). *Capere*, here in the sense of "contain," continues the aquatic metaphor: Pompey's *fama* is conceived as another aspect of his *manes* or *umbra*. In contrast to such overflowing, Lucan reminds us that Pompey's *nomen*, as currently embodied by his tomb, is sunk almost out of sight: *haud procul est ima Pompei nomen harena / depressum tumulo, quod non legat advena rectus, / quod nisi monstratum Romanus transeat hospes* ("Pompey's name, sunk by his tomb, is right next to the lowest sand, which no stranger may read standing, which unless pointed out, the Roman guest may pass over," 8.820-22). Like the ruins of Troy, Pompey's tomb needs a knowledgeable guide to give voice to its hidden *nomen*, and the narrator is providing just

this service.[108] However, the final section of Book 8 shows that the narrator will be a guide not just to the isolated *advena*, but, like Pompey's imaginary global audience in his silent speech, a herald to all peoples and times.

Though the narrator climbs down from these emotional heights as he muses about a return of Pompey's ashes to Rome one day (8.835ff), he soon resumes his former tone.[109] More than that, he even goes further in his *monumentum*-denying stance: he now simply wishes that the tomb, even as paltry as it is, disappear completely like the ruins of Troy in Book 9: *bustumque cadet, mortisque peribunt / argumenta tuae* ("and the grave will collapse, and evidence for your death will perish," 8.868-69). This is a logical extension of conceptualizing Pompey's *umbra* as an all-pervading liquid, for once it has spread and his name is known throughout the world, there is no longer any need for the original vessel. Even in the remainder of the epic, Pompey's *umbra* will begin the process of spreading, as once it has actually broken free from the tomb at the beginning of Book 9, it will pervade both Brutus and Cato as well as haunt the Alexandrian court.[110]

14. Epilogue: Caesarian Resistance?

When an unnamed Egyptian *satelles* reveals Pompey's head to Caesar on his arrival at Alexandria, this is his reaction:

iusto date tura sepulchro
et placate caput cineresque in litore fusos

[108] Mayer (1981) 184 notes the similarity of Pompey's tomb to that of Hector at 9.975ff.

[109] Mayer (1981) 185 points out the almost improvisatory nature of this concluding section.

[110] Hardie (1993) 42-43 sees this doubling (and more) of Pompey's *umbra* as worrisome given its adoption of Fury-like traits in Book 10, but I view it as the realization of the narrator's exhortation of its infinite spreading. In becoming more ominous, it even achieves a measure of Caesarian dormancy denied to the living Pompey. For further discussion of the role of Pompey's *umbra* in Books 9 and 10, see Easton (2011/12).

> *colligite atque unam sparsis date manibus urnam.*
> *sentiat adventum soceri vocesque querentis*
> *audiat umbra pias.* (9.1091-95)
>
> Give incense to his rightful grave and appease his head and gather his ashes strewn on the shore, and grant his scattered shade a single urn. Let his ghost sense the arrival of his father-in-law and let it hear his pious voice as he laments.

This act of making a proper memorial for his deceased rival may seem pious, but like his demeanor, it hides a sinister purpose. *Colligere*, far from being formulaic (as Pompey is now dead) is simply Caesar's attempt to to confine the shade to a small, easily identifiable space, and thus to reverse the entire process of overflow at the end of Book 8. In effect, Caesar is trying to put limits on Pompey's *Nachleben* and *fama*, so that his own will have no competition. He treats Pompey's remains like the remains of Troy: in both instances he tries to control their reception, thwarting or controlling alternate traditions in order to set up his own interpretation of events as dominant.[111]

The saga of Pompey is now concluded. The overflow and flooding model, a counterpart to formulaic behavior, has been utilized both by Caesar and the bodies of water that have tried to stop him. Pompey tried to harness it, but ended up becoming subsumed into it, and only after death. However differently they interacted with the formula, at least their individual relationships to formulaic activity were straightforward; even if Pompey was not able to act successfully according to the formula, it is clear that this at least was his goal. In turning to Cato, however, we encounter a figure whose relationship to the formula is far less clear.

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[111] Ahl (1976) 212-13 notes astutely that Lucan's compression of time between Caesar's visit at Troy and his gazing on Pompey's head heightens the similarities between these two bygone relics.

Chapter 6. Cato

Cato, like the desert to which he will be memorably bound, is an enigma. In spite of the relatively small amount of space which Lucan allots to him compared to Caesar and Pompey, he has been the center of heated critical debate. The main area of contention is whether Cato's journey through Libya in Book 9 reflects sincere Stoic values, or whether it is fatally undermined by the hardships that he suffers along the way (a corollary to this is whether Cato's choice to join the civil war in Book 2 corrupts him, as Brutus believes). This reflects the very fragility and ambiguity at the heart of his cause: what good is resistance after Pharsalus? What can possibly remain of *libertas* and the republic after Caesar has gained final victory? The present analysis takes as its basic assumption a view that has lately gained critical currency: that Lucan's Cato becomes helplessly enmeshed and compromised by his desert environment.[1] However, the focus of this chapter will be to examine Cato through the lens of the formula. On the surface this is problematic, since Cato, by his very nature as a Stoic, is fixed and immobile, whereas the formula is above all dynamic. In addition, Lucan makes no sustained connection between Cato and natural forces, as he does for Caesar and (more indirectly) Pompey. Moreover, Cato knows that even as he joins the Pompeians, he is aligning himself with a dead cause. There would seem to be nothing vital about him at all.

Yet because of his status as the new leader of the republican cause in Book 9, Cato does draw on Pompeian characteristics. He literally carries the legacy of Pompey within him in the form of his *umbra*. After its purification both by the narrator at the end

[1] This trend began with Johnson (1987) and has continued in Leigh (1997) 265-82 and Hershkowitz (1998) 231-46.

of Book 8 and in the heavens at the beginning of Book 9, it now appropriately resides within Cato, who likewise purifies the republican cause into one focused on *libertas* alone. But as noted above, this is the shadow of a cause; there is no hope that it can take on a new body again. Thus, Cato can only continue the legacy of Pompey's *umbra* in the form of spiritual overflow, which he reveals in the Jupiter Ammon episode. Instead of consulting the god, he proclaims an all-pervading Jupiter who is all but identical to the narrator's vision of Pompey's *umbra* at the end of Book 8. It is no accident that Cato's visit to the shrine occurs at the midpoint of the book. There, he rejects the traditional, enclosed form of the god and gives voice to a model that resists Caesar on the mental and spiritual level—a level on which physical resistance to Caesar is impossible.

Yet in spite of this spiritual ecstasy, which the narrator seemingly shares, the question of the physical journey still looms. It can be seen as a Pompeian *fuga* (Cato himself in fact calls it by this very name), and at the beginning of Book 9 Lucan mentions the need for his forces to escape Caesar's pursuit. Viewing Cato's journey in these terms becomes problematic, however, because it both a flight *from* Caesar as well as an escape *to* a destination. Ostensibly, Cato goes to seek help from Juba in Numidia (9.300-01), but this is barely mentioned in passing and is not alluded to again until nearly the end of the journey (9.868-69); we never see Juba, and the whole march ends on a quiet note of anticlimax. One senses that the journey itself is more important than its destination.

This fact is made clear by Cato himself when he says that he will use the harsh desert environment to train his army in Stoic *virtus*.[2] However, this is problematic

[2] For Cato's Stoicism, see Marti (1945) 359-61 and George (1991); Hershkowitz (1998) 234-35 briefly summarizes the theoretical background to his behavior. See also Roller (1996) 53-54 for a brief overall comment on Cato's conception of *virtus*. For *virtus* in Roman society and politics generally, see Earl (1967), Eisenhut (1973), and McDonnell (2006).

because once Cato steps into the arena of civil war in Libya, he is no longer in the "ivory tower" of Stoic contemplation (as he was in Book 2). He begins to show disturbing characteristics of Caesarian behavior due not only to his being immersed in the madness and confusion of civil war, but also because in order to be militarily effective, one cannot but succumb to the formula. In other words, to conquer Caesar, one must inevitably take on certain of his characteristics, but also at the risk of taking on his *furor*.[3]

At the same time, such flashes of Caesarian behavior as Cato exhibits are no match for the fully Caesarian environment of Libya, as embodied especially in its snakes. The snake episode gives the lie to the glorious image of Cato built up in the first half of Book 9. Their venom twists Cato's soldiers into grotesque parodies of the formula, including the overflow paradigm that, embodied in the Nile, could at least serve a beneficial purpose. All of Cato's training and inspirational talk seems to be of no use here against the natural virulence of the snakes, and the exhausted army is only saved at the last moment by the natural immunity of the Psylli. In the context of the entire book, then, the Pompeian, spiritual overflow proclaimed by Cato at the Hammonium sadly pales in comparison to the real, biological resistance of these tribesmen. This realization thus neatly foreshadows the role of the Nile in Book 10 as the last and greatest entity of natural resistance to Caesar.

[3] Hershkowitz (1998) 232 states this problem directly. Cato is usually cast as Caesar's polar opposite due to his single-minded pursuit of republican and Stoic ideals: see Marti (1945) 361-67 and Ahl (1976) 274-79. Wick (2004) 1.29 sees Lucan's Cato as an attempt to integrate the historical figure with the image of the Stoic sage, albeit unsuccessfully, which leads to a fractured and incoherent character.

1. Cato as Inverted Core

Brutus' Speech

Before we examine the effects of the Libyan journey on Cato, we must first examine how he crafts his self-image in Book 2. In this he is aided by Brutus, who addresses him as follows:

> *omnibus expulsae terris olimque fugatae*
> *virtutis iam sola fides, quam turbine nullo*
> *excutiet Fortuna tibi, tu mente labantem*
> *derige me, dubium certo tu robore firma*. (2.242-45)
>
> As the only guarantee of virtue now, which has been long ago driven out and banished from all lands, and which Fortune will strike from you with no whirlwind, guide me as I waver in thought, reinforce me as I hesitate with your sure strength.

Even though Brutus lavishly praises him as the only example of *virtus* here, Cato will commemorate Pompey in similar terms as a *fides…libertatis…ficta* ("false guarantee of liberty," 9.204-06). To be sure, *ficta* clearly marks Pompey out as false in contrast to Cato. Nevertheless, the point is that, when he introduces Cato, Lucan links him with a Pompeian shadow of the real, be it of *virtus* or *libertas*. The link is made more explicit by *fugatae*: just like the *virtus* whose substance is gone, Cato too will find himself banished to the ends of the known world. He too, like Pompey, will partake in *fuga*, since the desert journey serves as both escape from Caesar and a goal purposely taken to strengthen the army's *virtus*. This *fuga* is paradoxical, however, since it is certainly Cato's wish that his army grow strong enough to face Caesar again. Thus, Pompeian *fuga* will lead to formulaic dormancy, as escape *from* becomes escape *to*.

Of course, being the embodiment of *fides* also implies a sense of stability, which is expressed by *derige* and *certo…robore firma*.[4] Brutus elaborates on this theme:

> *pacemne tueris*
> *inconcussa tenens dubio vestigia mundo*
> *an placuit ducibus scelerum populique furentis*
> *cladibus immixtum civile absolvere bellum?* (2.247-50)
>
> Do you guard the peace, keeping your steps unshaken in an uncertain world, or have you resolved, mingling with the leaders of crimes and the disasters of a raging people, to acquit civil war?

For Brutus, Cato can only remain a moral exemplar if he stands totally aloof from the conflict; if he participates in civil war, he will inevitably be polluted by its *nefas*, and conversely, his presence will implicitly render it morally justified. At the same time, however, line 2.248 is pregnant with meaning. Brutus' metaphor will become physical reality in Book 9, as Cato will literally be trying to keep his footing in the treacherously swirling sands of Libya. Thus, the figurative (*dubio…mundo*) becomes the real: just as the spread of Pompeian *fama* is linked on a physical level to the overflowing of rivers, so the confusion of legal and mental categories inherent in civil war is here given substance in the ever-shifting North African landscape. In other words, Libya is a continuation of the civil war in a sort of sealed environment after the actual conflict is essentially over. Brutus in fact foresees the danger of Cato joining the "desert" of civil war: Cato will only able to keep a sure footing *outside* the conflict. Once he steps in with both feet, he will find it difficult, as we will see, both literally to maintain his stability in the desert, and conceptually to avoid the dangerous forces of the landscape from infecting or possessing him.

[4] Even though, as Sklenář (2003) 63 and Schrijvers (1989) note, Brutus is being disingenuous by asking for guidance when he is really trying to convince Cato of his own opinion.

As Brutus warms to his subject, he explicitly brings up the danger of Caesarian contamination:

> *ne tantum, o superi, liceat feralibus armis*
> *has etiam movisse manus. nec pila lacertis*
> *missa tuis caeca telorum in nube ferentur:*
> *ne tanta in cassum virtus eat, ingeret omnis*
> *se belli fortuna tibi. quis nolet in isto*
> *ense mori, quamvis alieno vulnere labens,*
> *et scelus esse tuum?* (2.260-66)
>
> O gods, may deadly weapons be not granted such power to move these hands as well. Javelins thrown by your arm will not travel in a blind cloud of weapons: lest such virtue pass in vain, war's entire fortune shall pile itself on you. Who will not wish to die by your sword, although tottering by another's wound, and be your crime?

Brutus pictures Cato participating in a fantasy *aristeia* at the center of the slaughter, of the kind that Scaeva might participate in; a Caesarian attitude seems to be seeping in.[5] However, Brutus' Cato remains fixed: he does not go to seek victims, but they will rush upon him. It is a Caesarian situation without Caesarian aggression. Cato's *virtus* might be imperceptibly fused with the traditional Roman martial connotation of the noun, but Brutus reverses roles by imagining the entire war (*belli fortuna*) hurtling toward Cato, who can remain immobile as a result (*in isto / ense mori* suggests a soldier throwing himself at Cato's sword). Cato's passivity is also indicated by the subject-object inversion of *armis…movisse manus*, as if the weapons, already polluted (*feralibus*), irresistibly drag Cato toward them.

Thus in Brutus' mind, Cato will still be unmoved, just as he would be in the moral alternative outside of war; he does not need to act, since the entire war will swarm upon him in self-sacrifice. In effect, Brutus pictures Cato as a magnet for violence or a sort of

[5] Hershkowitz (1998) 236 and Sklenář (2003) 65. This is not the only resemblance between these two apparently polar opposites: Hershkowitz (1998) 236 n.158 also points out that both retain their *virtus* even as their bodies are pierced.

universal target. Brutus changes the civil war from *pila minantia pilis* ("javelins threatening javelins," 1.7) to an obsessive centripetal focus.

Cato's Response

Brutus' suggestion of aloofness is not satisfactory for Cato, however. He had related Cato's separation from the fray to the fact that the upper layers of the atmosphere are least exposed to turbulence (2.272-73), thus essentially marginalizing Cato by taking him out of the action.[6] While this is right and proper in Brutus' mind because he viewed being in the center of civil war as a way for Cato to draw all the pollution of the war on to himself, Cato on the other hand must be in the thick of the turmoil:

> *sidera quis mundumque velit spectare cadentem*
> *expers ipse metus? quis, cum ruat arduus aether,*
> *terra labet mixto coeuntis pondere mundi,*
> *compressas tenuisse manus?* (2.289-92)
>
> Who would wish to watch the stars and universe falling, himself free of fear? Who, when the lofty ether collapses and the earth sinks from the combined weight of the universe compacting on itself, would wish to hold his hands folded?

In the face of this vision of catastrophe, Cato cannot stand aside. He knows that being *securus* is to be a spectator (*spectare*), to be emotionally uninvolved with the carnage like a Sulla.[7] It is, however, also the same image as the fantasy *aristeia* in which Brutus imagines him (and which will appear later in his own speech): the universe converges

[6] As Ahl (1976) 237 notes, Brutus' language in 2.266-73 also recalls Lucretius' description of the gods at *DRN* 5.146-55, which undermines his suggestion to stay away from civil war by underscoring an Epicurean affinity.

[7] Yet as Leigh (1997) 30 notes, in Book 9 Cato cannot help but take on this Sullan role of detachment. At the same time, however, it has been pointed out that Cato's decision to join the civil war is problematic from a Stoic viewpoint, most of all in his opening statement to Brutus at 2.286-88: see Bartsch (1997) 117-23 for a recent take in this vein. For historical context, see Brunt (1975), who concludes that Stoic thought in the principate could accommodate political quietism.

(*coeuntis*), just as the weapons will converge on Cato. In this light, it is somewhat presumptuous of Cato to mention *manus*, since, as Brutus' (and his own) image of his role in civil war show, Cato will remain passive.

Turning to Cato's own version of the *aristeia*, we see that he adopts Brutus' scenario:

> *me geminae figant acies, me barbara telis*
> *Rheni turba petat, cunctis ego pervius hastis*
> *excipiam medius totius vulnera belli*. (2.309-11)
>
> Let both battle-lines pierce me, let the Rhine's barbarous crowd aim at me with their missiles—I shall receive the entire war's wounds in the middle, pierced by all spears.

He also pictures himself as the lone figure against the whole war, but turns its symbolic significance from negative to positive. Instead of incurring universal pollution, he will become the universal scapegoat of civil war: *hic redimat sanguis populos, hac caede luatur / quidquid Romani meruerunt pendere mores* ("let this blood redeem the peoples, let whatever Roman morals deserve to pay be atoned by this murder," 2.312-13).[8] Also, more explicitly than Brutus, he places himself precisely at the center of the civil war space (*medius*). Instead of piercing each other and thus causing *nefas*, Cato wants the weapons of both sides to aim at him. In addition, this picture of civil war matches Cato's metaphor above of a collapsing universe. Just as the world will converge on a single point, so Cato imagines that the entire battlefield turns on him. The sentiment is uncomfortably close to the Caesarian sense of unconcern for safety that we see in Scaeva as well as the Libyan lion of Book 1, who springs against the hunter's javelin *tanti*

[8] Cato's self-image here has generally been regarded as form of *devotio*: see Ahl (1976) 244, Johnson (1987) 41, Hardie (1993) 31, and Leigh (1997) 129-30.

securus vulneris (note *cunctis ego pervius hastis*).[9] Again, the difference is that Cato remains completely passive here, and even more so in contrast to Brutus' description, which had him at least draw his sword. Cato does not—indeed cannot—provide forward momentum of his own, unlike Caesarian figures. Instead of the centripetal nature of the Caesarian formula, which regenerates by gathering its distantly scattered parts, Cato only sees himself as a central point upon which all force in the world converges, or in other words, a sort of inverted Caesarian core. To nullify the *summum nefas* (2.286) of civil war, he would have himself be wounded by all weapons on behalf of the world, an act that is a perversion of Caesarian behavior, which absorbs all surrounding energy in order subsequently to direct it outward; Cato's attraction of force is not recharging, only suffering. Indeed, Book 9 will show that Cato can only sporadically manage attempts at Caesarian behavior that amount to nothing. In addition, even this fixed, schematic image of Cato's martyrdom will be foiled by the shifting, unpredictable landscape of the desert and its deadly fauna.

In accordance with his inability to be formulaic, Cato resumes Pompeian motifs:

> *ceu morte parentem*
> *natorum orbatum longum producere funus*
> *ad tumulos iubet ipse dolor, iuvat ignibus atris*
> *inseruisse manus constructoque aggere busti*
> *ipsum atras tenuisse faces, non ante revellar*
> *exanimem quam te complectar, Roma; tuumque*
> *nomen, Libertas, et inanem persequar umbram.* (2.297-303)
>
> Just as grief itself bids a parent, bereaved by the death of his son, escort a long funeral train to the grave, and it pleases him to thrust his hands into the black fires and to hold the black torches himself on the pyre's mound

[9] See Hershkowitz (1998) 236 and 236 n.158 on the similarity between Cato and Scaeva as well as 239-42 on Cato's obsessive self-centeredness in this passage as a mirror image of Caesar's.

> heaped high, I will not tear myself away before I embrace your dead body, Rome; I shall pursue your name, liberty, and its empty shadow.

This simile echoes the one at the beginning of Book 2 comparing Rome's shock at Caesar's arrival to that arising from a death in the household.[10] However, Cato's simile continues the scenario, as it were, moving from a fresh death to the funeral procession. Lo and behold, the corpse is Rome's. As Cato's barren remarriage with Marcia will show, he is intimately associated with death: Lucan describes her as coming straight to Cato after burying Hortensius and in mourning garb (2.333-37), *non aliter placitura viro* ("intending in no other way to please her husband," 2.337).[11] However, the last two lines plainly show that Pompey is the real referent. *Nomen* and *umbram* obviously recall the famous description of Pompey as *magni nominis umbra* in Book 1. Brutus said that Cato was only the *fides virtutis* in his speech; likewise, Cato can only hang on to the shadow of *libertas*. Even before Pompey's death, then, and his literal vanishing into true *umbra* and *nomen* (as opposed to just symbolically), Cato already is a man who only clasps to himself the semblance of things and not their reality. His connection to Pompey is strengthened by the similarity between 2.303 and Cornelia's statement in Book 9: *iam nunc te per inane chaos, per Tartara, coniunx, / si sunt ulla, sequar* ("and now, husband, I shall follow you through empty chaos, through Tartarus (if it exists)," 9.101-02). Just as Cornelia hopes to cling to Pompey's shade in the afterlife forever, Cato is already showing that he is committed to a similar mode of action long before Pompey's death, "chasing" (*persequar*) the shadow of the republic as it practices Pompeian *fuga*. Although Cato's pursuit seems like a dead end here, he will ultimately be vindicated by

[10] Fantham (1992a) 83.

[11] See Ahl (1976) 247-49.

Pompey's death in Book 8. As we saw in the previous chapter, the narrator succeeds in raising Pompey's *umbra* to an immeasurably greater height than the man could ever meet in life, thus purging *umbra* of its negative connotations. By the time we come to book 9, the *umbra* of *libertas* and Pompey will be transformed into something far more positive, and it is at that point that Cato will be ready to take over as leader.[12]

Yet for all of this spiritual victory, Lucan makes it clear that Cato's imaginary *aristeia* is exactly that: *hic dabit, hic pacem iugulus finemque malorum / gentibus Hesperiis* ("this throat, this, will bring peace to the Hesperian nations and an end to evils," 2.317-18). The idea that the death of one man can stop an entire society from turning upon itself, while admirably idealistic, is also unfortunately contrary to reality. In addition, regardless of the content of Cato's speech, its effect is also morally dubious because it incites Brutus into states of mind that are dangerous from a Stoic viewpoint: *sic fatur, et acris / irarum movit stimulos iuvenisque calorem / excitat in nimios belli civilis amores* ("thus he spoke, and he stirred the sharp pricks of anger and aroused the youth's ardor for excessive love of civil war," 2.323-25). Brutus, who had wanted to convince Cato to remain serenely detached under the guise of asking for advice, ends up being incited into a raging passion for civil war.[13] Not only that, *irarum…stimulos* is clearly a Caesarian emotion.[14] Whether he stays out of civil war or rushes into it, it seems that Cato is trapped in a Caesarian world. Small wonder, then, that only a world of

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[12] See Bartsch (1997) 115, who proclaims that "it is more convenient to have a dead Pompey than a living one" because he can "be turned into prop for ideological belief." As Ahl (1976) 57 states, Cato keeps the "disembodied ideal" of the republic alive.

[13] As Hershkowitz observes (1998) 236-37; she compares Brutus' reaction with that of Petreius at 4.235-36 and Vulteius at 4.520-21, adding that *calor* can be synonymous with *furor*. Ahl (1976) 246-47 downplays Brutus' reaction, suggesting that Lucan is merely describing his hotheadedness.

[14] *Stimulus* is predominantly associated with Caesar: the Libyan lion *se…stimulavit* (1.208), and Caesar himself is described as *stumulusque furorum* (7.557).

shadows is left for him to occupy. Yet it seems that he can only absorb the negative emotions of Caesarian behavior (e.g. *furor*) without being able to take advantage of the self-revitalizing cycle which they activate. Even his imagined *aristeia* stops short of being Caesarian because of Cato's immobile stance. It will be seen whether he fares any differently in the desert.

2. Cato in Book 9: Before the Desert

Cato as Leader of the Opposition

After Cato reappears in the narrative at the beginning of Book 9, we see how he can now become the leader of the republican opposition. The short description of him at 9.19-24 bears out the inseparable bond that Cato himself made clear in Book 2 between himself and the dead republican ideal:

> *Ille, ubi pendebant casus dubiumque manebat*
> *quem dominum mundi facerent civilia bella,*
> *oderat et Magnum, quamvis comes isset in arma*
> *auspiciis raptus patriae ductuque senatus;*
> *at post Thessalicas clades iam pectore toto*
> *Pompeianus erat.* (9.19-24)
>
> That man, when circumstances hung in the balance and it remained doubtful whom civil war would make the master of the world, had hated Magnus as well, although he entered combat as his companion, hastened by his country's command and the senate's leadership; but after the Thessalian disaster he was now a Pompeian with all his heart.

At first glance, the closing *sententia* seems like a typically Lucanian paradox. However, Cato can be a Pompeian now because Pompey has been completely transfigured and redeemed both by his death and through the narrative voice. His *umbra*, liberated from the man's earthly compromises, can now enter Cato: *invicti posuit se mente Catonis* ("it

placed itself in the mind of unconquered Cato," 9.18). This is a shade that has been endowed with *ignea virtus* ("fiery virtue," 9.7), and which has imbibed the light of the *aether* (*illic postquam se lumine vero / implevit*, "after it filled itself with true light there," 9.11-12).[15] As such, it is cleansed of its earthly sins and compromises and is now worthy to be contained in a vessel such as Cato. Far from the funereal atmosphere in Cato's Book 2 speech, *umbra* as a motif now carries a confident tone.

Lucan explains this further: *totae post Magni funera partes / Libertatis erant* ("the entire party after Magnus' death was that of freedom," 9.29-30). Pompey's death frees his own *umbra* to be blended conceptually with the dead *libertas* as well, as we saw in Cato's Book 2 speech. What Pompey's death did for his own model of resistance, it now also does for the republican cause as a whole. While his death in a sense freed the eastern rivers, from whose lands he drew his auxiliaries, to continue resistance on their own, more successful terms, it also disencumbers the hypocrisy of having a quasi-eastern potentate be the leader of the republican side, thus allowing a purist like Cato to take up the cause without ideological compromise.

At the same time, Lucan balances this focus on the spiritual with formulaic hints:

> *patriam tutore carentem*
> *excepit, populi trepidantia membra refovit,*
> *ignavis manibus proiectos reddidit enses,*
> *nec regnum cupiens gessit civilia bella*
> *nec servire timens*. (9.24-28)
>
> He took in his country that was lacking a guardian, he revived the people's trembling limbs, he returned to their indolent hands the swords they had

[15] Schotes (1969) 74-75 argues that Lucan is following a tradition established by Chrysippus on the destination of the soul after death. Sklenář (2003) 126-27 is however skeptical of the value of the apotheosis.

> thrown away, he waged civil war neither desiring autocracy nor fearing to be a slave.

Line 9.25 is a vivid personification of Rome as a frightened individual,[16] but the language also verges on the Caesarian. The Pompeian party has literally splintered after Pharsalus, and Cato is trying to do his best to revive at least part of it. However, in Lucan's world, the act of re-energizing cannot but be a Caesarian act: *refovit* and *reddidit* is Cato's way of using his men's present dormancy (*ignavis*) in order to rebuild their strength. Cato thus faces the same dilemma as Pompey did throughout the epic (especially in Book 8): how to partake of that seemingly magical Caesarian ability of self-regeneration without also succumbing to the *furor* that drives it—a Faustian bargain at best.[17] Note how carefully the narrator stipulates Cato's mission at 9.27-28: Cato is not doing this for personal gain, but at the same time, can one really wage civil war and expect not to be contaminated in some way?

Yet these Caesarian hints are immediately undermined:

> *quas* [*partes*] *ne per litora fusas*
> *colligeret rapido victoria Caesaris actu,*
> *Corcyrae secreta petit ac mille carinis*
> *abstulit Emathiae secum fragmenta ruinae.* (9.30-33)
>
> That Caesar's victory by quick maneuver might not confine his party, scattered across the shores, he seeks Corcyra's retreats and in a thousand ships carried off the fragments of Emathian destruction.

Colligo is the arch-formulaic verb (recall its use in both the lightning and lion similes of Book 1). However, these lines suggest that Cato is not actually capable (at least at this

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[16] Wick (2004) 2.19 evocatively, if somewhat curiously, compares the transition from 9.24 to 9.25 to Ovid's technique of transformation in the *Metamorphoses*.

[17] Hershkowitz (1998) 244 states this dilemma most succinctly, though she stands unequivocally on the side of Cato's inescapability from *furor*.

point in time) of performing such a move on his own, even with such a large force (*mille carinis*); instead, any gathering would be done by Caesar in preparation for a final assault and annihilation, akin to Curio's defeat in Book 4. Instead, Cato chooses to hide his broken forces: he seeks *secreta*, which are like the *recessus* that Pompey sought in life.[18] Even though fragmentation means weakness, it has the advantage in that, in this condition, it is more difficult to be eradicated for good. In other words, it is a better strategy for Cato to let his side remain *fragmenta* in the hope of regeneration in some distant future. Finally, we should not forget that Caesar, in his Book 3 simile, specified that he needs an obstacle in order for his formula to do its work: he needs his opponents to become as compact as he is (thus *colligeret* of Cato's fleet before its destruction). Therefore it is to Cato's advantage to remain loose and scattered in order to deny Caesar an easy target. At the same time, he should also bide his time in a location as inaccessible to Caesar as possible; for after Pharsalus, Caesar is everywhere. Just as even the rumor of his arrival drove Roman citizens into panic in Book 1, the remaining Pompeians see Caesar's shadow in everything: *praeceps facit omne timendum / victor, et in nulla non creditur esse carina* ("the impetuous victor causes everything to be dreaded, and he is thought to be in every ship," 9.47-48). Similarly, Sextus sees Caesar's hand in his father's murder: *nec credens Pharium tantum potuisse tyrannum / litore Niliaco socerum iam stare putavi* ("and not believing that the Pharian tyrant had such power, I thought his father-in-law already stood on the Nile's shore," 9.134-35). This is Caesarian overflow, breaking the Pompeian barrier, as it were, at Pharsalus and a continuation of the *Caesar omnia erat* theme.

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[18] *Fragmenta ruinae* is similar to Lucan's description of Troy at 9.969 (*etiam periere ruinae*), though of course the decay is much more advanced there.

In order to escape his all-pervading presence, Cato therefore must continue the Pompeian *fuga* in Libya (he in fact calls it just that at 9.406); recall that Pompey himself mused on the idea of drifting outside the bounds of civilization if he could find no more allies (8.311-13). In a way, Cato is fulfilling Pompey's wish by taking his men to the limit of the known world. However, we should also not forget that continuing a centrifugal movement away from Pharsalus is also, from the formulaic point of view, the continuation of an ebbing away of energy. It remains to be seen whether Cato can balance escape with entropy.

Cato's Rejection of the Cornelian Pompey

At first, however, Cato still has to reject the Pompeian model of civil war leadership, which is embodied for the last time in Cornelia and Pompey's sons. The latter provide a potential rivalry to Cato's leadership, and their model of opposition must be refuted if Cato's version of the cause is to prevail (note especially Sextus, whom Lucan describes as *Magno proles indigna parente*, "offspring unworthy of a parent such as Magnus," 6.420). Cornelia assertively takes charge, even quoting her late husband's commands to Sextus verbatim. In fact, she uses the same language as Pompey did in his requests for eastern help: *tu pete bellorum casus et signa per orbem, / Sexte, paterna move* ("seek opportunities for war, Sextus, and rouse your father's standards through the world," 9.84-85; see 2.633 and 3.229). She quotes him as follows:

> *'me cum fatalis leto damnaverit hora,*
> *excipite, o nati, bellum civile, nec umquam,*
> *dum terris aliquis nostra de stirpe manebit,*
> *Caesaribus regnare vacet. vel sceptra vel urbes*
> *libertate sua validas impellite fama*
> *nominis: has vobis partes, haec arma relinquo.*

> *inveniet classes quisquis Pompeius in undas*
> *venerit, et noster nullis non gentibus heres*
> *bella dabit: tantum indomitos memoresque paterni*
> *iuris habete animos. uni parere decebit,*
> *si faciet partes pro libertate, Catoni.'* (9.87-97)
>
> 'Since the fatal hour has condemned me to death, receive, O my sons, the civil war, nor, as long as one of our stock remains on earth, may there be room for the Caesars to reign. Strike kings or cities mighty in their freedom with the renown of my name: I bequeath this party and these arms to you. Any Pompey who ventures into the water will find a fleet, and our heir shall bring war to every nation: only keep your spirits unconquered and mindful of your father's rights. It will be proper to obey Cato alone, if he is on the side of liberty.'

Pompey's own words betray a distinct lack of desire for freedom; rather, he seems to view the civil war as a personal or familial struggle: see *heres*, line 9.89, and the plural *Caesaribus*, as if Pompey were somehow looking ahead to the principate. *Vacet* also recalls Pompey's first speech, where he boasted of total world domination (*pars mundi mihi nulla vacat*, 2.583), and it is tied to a formulaic conception of power as a kind of spreading, as we saw with Caesar (9.94-95 confirms this overflow dynamic). Therefore, it is no surprise that Pompey mentions *fama nominis* here, for this has been his obsession since the Book 1 oak simile. Just after the narrator has redeemed his *umbra* at the end of Book 8, Pompey's own words jarringly remind us of his vanity and weaknesses in life. This is Pompey's *nomen* not as a sort of universal emblem of resistance, but tied to the man's earthly achievements, especially to a desire for renewed power as we saw in Book 8 in his attempts to enlist the Parthians. What is new here is his open wish to pass his name on to his descendants, no matter how unworthy they may be: Pompey's longing for monarchy, only hinted at earlier in the epic, is now fully revealed. *Quisquis Pompeius* summarizes his hereditary conception of resistance, as though Sextus could command the same respect and have the same success just because he carries the same *nomen.* Unlike

the narrator's attempt to continue his *nomen* after his death, Pompey's own continuation of his *nomen* in the family line is marked only by degeneration. In light of all this, it is utterly incongruous for him to tell his sons to follow Cato, that exemplar of *libertas*. Thus, Pompey's words from beyond the grave not only serve to underscore the chasm between his and Cato's plans for the republican cause, but also, in revealing his attempt to shoehorn his own vision into Cato's, remind the reader of his political obliviousness and timidity. For he does not dare to tell his sons to strike out openly on their own monarchical path, but is obtuse enough to believe that Cato would tolerate such ambitions.

Finally, the context of this command serves to question its viability, since it is set in a speech delivered by Cornelia that is remarkable for being completely absorbed with death. Apparently, Pompey's *umbra* has taken residence in her as well, but not to the same effect as it has for Cato or Brutus:

> *quid porro tumulis opus est aut ulla requiris*
> *instrumenta, dolor? non toto in pectore portas,*
> *impia, Pompeium? non imis haeret imago*
> *visceribus?* (9.69-72)
>
> Besides, my grief, what need is there for a tomb, or do you require any instruments? Do you not carry Pompey in all your heart, wicked one? Does his image not cling to your innermost vitals?

Like the narrator at the end of Book 8, Cornelia rejects an external marker of Pompey's death, but instead of setting his *umbra* free, she becomes a living tomb for it. As she adds latter, *elapsus felix de pectore Magnus: / hunc volumus quem Nilus habet* ("the prosperous Magnus has faded from my heart: we want the one whom the Nile possesses," 9.81-82), thus recalling Pompey's own words to her at 8.77ff after his defeat. Instead, Cornelia looks to the private Pompey who was ruined by Pharsalus and wishes to keep

him for herself only, thus "imprisoning" his *umbra* again after its liberation by the narrator (and also after it has broken free and settled in Cato). In doing so, she combines the private and/or defeated Pompey of Books 5 and 8, the hiding motif of the vanquished, and Pompey's *umbra* into a single image of pessimism and death. Our last glimpse of her is of one who has already gone to a symbolic underworld:[19]

> *sic ubi fata, caput ferali obduxit amictu*
> *decrevitque pati tenebras puppisque cavernis*
> *delituit, saevumque arte complexa dolorem*
> *perfruitur lacrimis et amat pro coniuge luctum.* (9.109-12)
>
> After speaking thus, she veiled her head in funereal garb and declared that she would endure the shadows and withdrew into the ship's hollows, and embracing tightly her fierce grief, she enjoys her tears to the full and loves her sorrow as her spouse.

Cornelia had already visualized the remainder of her life in terms of a living hell: *quam longo tradita leto / incertum est* ("it is uncertain as to how long a death to which I am consigned," 9.102-03).[20] The ship's hold is merely a realization of this wish (*tenebras*). Here is Lucan's final, mournful evocation of the hiding motif. Just as Cornelia "hid" Pompey's *umbra* within her, she now hides herself inside the ship. The last line is telling: the Pompey which she loves and keeps within her is that represented by her private grief, while she hands over his public legacy to his sons. One can say that Cato, Cornelia, and Pompey's sons all have their own version of him. However, only Cato's "Pompey" will have any further role to play in the epic, not only because Lucan does not focus on their future role in the civil war, but also because the Stoic Jupiter that Cato proclaims at the Hammonium is of the same substance as his Pompey. Even though Cato

[19] Cornelia had already proclaimed her intention to follow Pompey into the underworld at 9.101-02.

[20] See the explanation of this sentence by Shackleton Bailey (2009) 229.

follows an *umbram* just as much as Cornelia does, it is a positive, expansive *umbra* that has broken free from his tomb.

In a sense, Cato's version seems to be vindicated when he prevents Gnaeus from taking revenge on Egypt for his father's death. Apart from it being overkill and a bad strategic maneuver (since Caesar might also be in the area), conceptually it must lose out. The ambiguity of such an action is signaled by *iustaque furens pietate* ("raging with righteous filial feeling," 9.147); can *pietas* remain untainted by *furor*?[21] Gnaeus' plan—to desecrate the graves of the Egyptian rulers and gods—bears some similarity to the narrator's angry apostrophe toward Egypt at the end of Book 8: both wish the Nile to flood the kingdom (8.828-30, 9.156). And his macabre closing image of Pompey's *umbra* as sole inhabitant of Egypt certainly fits into the overflow paradigm: *solusque tenebis / Aegypton, genitor, populis superisque fugatis* ("and you alone shall have Egypt, father, after its peoples and gods are routed," 9.163-64). In effect, Gnaeus wants Egypt to become one massive mausoleum for Pompey. However, the difference between Gnaeus' and Cato's ideas of Pompey is that even a kingdom for a tomb is still a tomb. Pompey's son cannot conceive of a Pompey completely unbounded in space, freed from human customs of burial and hence of human outrage over the lack of it. Thus Cato must stop an act that stems from indignation, no matter how pious: *sed Cato laudatam iuvenis compescuit iram* ("but Cato checked the youth's lauded anger," 9.166).[22]

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[21] Hershkowitz (1998) 209-11 shows that it cannot be, though curiously neither she nor Ahl (1976) 274-79 in his discussion on *pietas* and *furor* cite this passage. Seewald (2008) 95-96 sees the influence of Sen. *De Ira* I.12.5 here: *irasci pro suis non est pii animi sed infirmi* ("to be angered on behalf of one's own kin is not the quality of a pious mind, but of a weak one").

[22] Here I take issue with Sklenář (2003) 81, who takes *laudatam* to mean "praised by Cato"; it seems possible that the past participle can also mean "praised (by others in the group)." Of course, Cato is no stranger to *ira*, as the desert voyage will show.

Cato's Method of Leadership

Cato's eulogy to Pompey is odd, not least because even though he minces no words about the man, Lucan still prefaces it with this statement:

> *non tamen ad Magni pervenit gratius umbras*
> *omne quod in superos audet convicia vulgus*
> *Pompeiumque deis obicit, quam pauca Catonis*
> *verba sed a pleno venientia pectore veri…* (9.186-89)
>
> However, all the crowd that dares to reproach the gods and reproach them for Pompey did not more pleasingly reach Magnus' shade than Cato's words, few but coming from a heart full of truth…

Could Cato's lukewarm opinion really be more pleasing to Pompey's shade than the outrage of the *vulgus* against his unjust fate (that very same *vulgus* whose love Pompey had so desired in life)? One might be tempted to say that the poet's partiality for Cato has gone too far here, but the *umbra* approves because it has already been transfigured from its heavenly experience at the beginning of Book 1 (*vidit quanta sub nocte iaceret / nostra dies*, "it saw the extent of the night under which lay our day," 9.13-14). It can thus look on with approval at Cato's unsparing assessment of the human Pompey. And as Cato would have it, he was a living contradiction. He sums up Pompey's career in a series of staccato antitheses.[23] One in particular stands out because it sums up the fundamental flaw of Pompey as the leader of the republican cause: *rectorque senatus, / sed regnantis, erat* ("and he was the ruler of the senate, though it reigned," 9.194-95). Who exactly was really directing the war effort—the senate or Pompey?[24] It may be objected that *rector* does not necessarily imply *regnum*, so that both Pompey's and the senate's leadership can technically coexist. However, the lack of a defined chain of

[23] Morford (1996) 6-7 sums up the rhetorical techniques of this speech.

[24] Recall the paradoxical command of the senate at Epirus: *Magnumque iubete / esse ducem* (5.46-47).

command actually hampered the historical Pompey's military effectiveness, and Lucan reflects this fact in describing how Pompey was persuaded to engage Caesar at Pharsalus against his better judgment (see the previous chapter). Of course, Cato, as the leader of the *optimates*, would count this ambiguity in leadership as a positive quality, but as will be seen, it also hampers his own ability to relate to his men and thus renders him much less Caesarian (for better or worse).

The devastating climax of this "eulogy" comes when Cato reveals the sham that Pompey had been all along: *olim vera fides Sulla Marioque receptis / libertatis obit: Pompeio rebus adempto / nunc et ficta perit* ("when once Sulla and Marius were admitted, the true assurance of liberty perished: after Pompey has been removed from matters, now even its false assurance has gone," 9.204-06). In this he seems to contradict himself just a few lines earlier, when he said that Pompey was *salva / libertate potens* ("powerful, yet with freedom preserved," 9.192-93). But then this is the essence of Pompey—confusion of terminology, such that nothing is really what it seems (even while alive he was a shadow of his earlier self). Thus we have the revelation that, even before the civil war, Pompey was already caught in the welter of indefinite signifiers that characterizes the world of Lucan's epic. After all, if both he and the senate were "kings" (cf. *regnare*), then the word *regnare* is meaningless, as is *libertas*.

At the same time, Cato's harsh truth is cleansing: reaching rock bottom means that the only direction to go is up—a formulaic move, in fact. Thus Cato will follow in the vein of the narrator at the end of Book 8, who transfigured Pompey and the shame previously associated with *umbra* into a triumphant *umbra*—only he will do the same sort of purifying with *libertas*. However, in a world now decisively dominated by Caesar, it

remains to be seen what form exactly this new *libertas* will take—whether it will be tangible, or else wholly spiritual like the overflow of Pompey's *umbra*.

However, both men share a telling trait: the reactions to their first speeches are less than enthusiastic. Cato gets this response: *fremit interea discordia vulgi* ("meanwhile the crowd murmurs in discord," 9.217; cf. the response to Pompey's speech at 2.596-98). This is not a very auspicious beginning to Cato's tenure as head of the republican forces, and it shows that he, like Pompey, seems to have trouble being of one mind with his men (a prerequisite for Caesarian action). Such distance will be stretched to grotesque extremes during the snake episode, where it is his men who will suffer while Cato can only attempt to hide these grotesque forms of death by hurrying the rest of them along.

These sentiments are clarified by the speech of an anonymous soldier, who voices the un-republican opinion that he sees nothing of value in continuing the civil war now that Pompey is dead: *Pompei duxit in arma, / non belli civilis, amor* ("love for Pompey, not for civil war, led me to battle," 9.227-28). He identifies the man with the cause: *causaque nostra perit* ("and our cause is dead," 9.230), i.e., the mortal Pompey was his reason for fighting, not the Pompey-as-*umbra*, who has become melded with the shade of *libertas*. The soldier thus shows an unsettling lack of faith in principle, compounded by his acceptance of Caesar's legitimacy: *sub iura togati / civis eo* ("I will go under the laws of a toga-clad citizen," 9.238-39). However, he does bring up a salient point: *nam quis erit finis si nec Pharsalia pugnae / nec Pompeius erit?* ("for what will be the end of battle, if not Pharsalia nor Pompey?" 9.232-33). The word *finis* is significant in Lucan if

only for its negation, and in this case the soldier suggests that carrying the fight onwards, especially to an inhospitable realm, may prolong the survival of the cause, but at the cost of the *nefas* of civil war itself.[25] He says as much at the end of his speech: *Pompeio scelus est bellum civile perempto, / quo fuerat vivente fides* ("with Pompey dead, civil war is a crime, though while he lived it was my duty," 9.248-49). For example, how responsible should Cato be for the gruesome deaths of his men from the snake attacks? Instead of continuing the fight, the soldier seems to want to continue being scattered into oblivion: *Emathium sparsit victoria ferrum* ("victory has scattered Emathia's swords," 9.245).[26] In any case, far from being dismissed as a minority opinion, the soldier's objections should be kept in mind throughout the rest of the book as an alternate perspective; even though he is too ready to acquiesce to Caesarian autocracy, he also brings up the danger of continuing the fight because it will immerse Cato fully in civil war, which cannot but either contaminate him or else force him to take on more Caesarian characteristics.

Predictably, the soldier gets a severe dressing down from Cato, who accuses him of acquiescence to slavery and being a Pompeian, not a Roman (9.257-58). He sardonically calls the soldier and those who agree with him *securi* ("carefree," 9.272), recalling Cato's rejection of this attitude in his Book 2 speech. By quitting civil war, they can watch disinterestedly and from a distance the struggles and deaths of those who are still involved. And yet, even though he dismisses the *infelix coniunx Magni* ("ill-omened wife of Magnus," 9.277) and her offspring, Cato's mission is perhaps as much about

[25] Masters (1992) 251-53 sums up the endlessness of civil war in Lucan.

[26] Lucan describes his feelings as *aperta / mente fugae* ("his intention to flee revealed," 9.225-26); that is, the soldier wants a real *fuga*, not one that leads to such regeneration as Cato will attempt in the desert.

death as hers. He does not mince words about the nature of the quest, for survival is not his highest priority: *cur non maiora mereri / quam vitam veniamque libet?* ("why does it not please you to earn something greater than life and pardon?" 9.275-76). Just as Cato takes up the banner of a dead ideal, so perhaps that ideal can only be realized through one's own death. This seems to be the only reasonable way to interpret *nunc patriae iugulos ensesque negatis, / cum prope libertas?* ("do you now deny your country your throats and swords, when freedom is nearby?" 9.264-65): unless this is rhetoric for the army's consumption, real, post-Pompeian and post-Caesarian liberty consists of a noble death.

Nevertheless, the effect of this speech is to prevent the remaining soldiers from deserting. Lucan takes the opportunity here to compare the effect of Cato's speech to a simile about forgetful bees being recalled to their task of gathering honey.[27] That he would take the time for a simile here means that this is a crucial moment, a moment in which potentially the remnants of the republican cause might have become fully fragmented. Instead, Cato effects a minor revitalization, and in this respect partakes of the formula. Lucan suggests this much in the simile: *simul effetas linquunt examina ceras* ("together the swarms leave their cells that have given birth," 9.285). *Effetas* is the formulaic word here, and it is double-edged: on the one hand, its neutral sense (*OLD* 1) brings a touch of optimism to Cato's proceedings by looking forward to the "rebirth" of his men in the desert. Given the current condition of the men, however, the literal sense makes sense only while looking ahead to the future. This is where the negative

[27] This simile can ultimately be traced back to *Il.* 2.87-89, but Lucan is mostly indebted to Vergil's description of the bees at *Geo.* 4.51-108, especially 4.103-08, where Vergil instructs the reader to recall the wayward bees by removing the queen bees' wings.

connotation of *effetus* as "exhausted" (*OLD* 2) is valid as well.[28] One might presume that it reflects Cato's association with sterility and death in Book 2, thus making it an open question as to whether he has any vitality left to instill in these men. Ensuing events will prove the latter connotation mostly correct, as the men are picked apart by the snakes and achieve a measure of learning only at the very end of the Libyan episode. However, given that the shepherd at 9.291 certainly refers to Cato, these cells should more properly refer to the republican cause itself. But as Cato has said, *libertas* is already an *inanis umbra* (2.303), and given that Cato is now the embodiment of the republic anyway, the *cerae* effectively represent him as well.

As the simile continues, its correspondence with the narrative becomes clearer: *sed sibi quaeque volat* ("but each flies for itself," 9.287). The bees' atomization and loss of unity reflect the *fragmenta* (9.33) that the republican cause has become after Pharsalus, and it is reminiscent of the panic at Rome in Book 1 upon Caesar's arrival: *naufragium sibi quisque facit* (1.503). They have been shattered by Caesar's formulaic assault. Now, even though they were unable to utilize the formula in the battle itself, the coalescing and regeneration that the republicans must undergo places them in the dormant phase of the formula. Yet, as his association with death shows, Cato is unable to be a truly vital force for the republican forces, and as his speech at 9.379-406 shows, he sees the march in terms of the journey and not its destination, even at the cost of death.

Now the blast of a Phrygian trumpet does manage to stop the bees' further disintegration (2.288-89), presumably by the shepherd. He plays a more important role here than in Pompey's Book 2 bull simile: *gaudet in Hyblaeo securus gramine pastor / divitias servasse casae* ("the shepherd, carefree in the Hyblaean meadow, rejoices that he

[28] *Pace* Seewald (2008) 166.

has guarded the wealth of his hut," 9.291-92). Unlike in the former simile, there is no confusion about the identity of the shepherd, who clearly represents Cato, especially given the epithet *securus*. Again, however, this adjective brings with it its darker connotations: Cato is cast as an outsider to his men, thus foreshadowing his role as helpless spectator in the snake episode. In addition, the shepherd is happy because the bees are working to produce food for him. In other words, the shepherd uses the bees for his own profit, without reference to what the bees gain from it. This works well if the dynamic between Cato and his men is merely that of general and army, but if Cato is also to serve as a Stoic preceptor, then the bee-shepherd analogy does not provide a model of reciprocity, and suggests that his men do not learn much, if anything, from him at all.

That said, the training of Cato's army commences, as they finally proceed into the desert.[29] Lucan describes their regimen thus:

> *iamque actu belli non doctas ferre quietem*
> *constituit mentes serieque agitare laborum.*
> *primum litoreis miles lassatur harenis.*
> *proximus in muros et moenia Cyrenarum*
> *est labor: exclusus nulla se vindicat ira,*
> *poenaque de victis sola est vicisse Catonem*. (9.294-99)
>
> And now he decided by activity of war and a succession of tasks to exercise minds not taught to endure idleness. First he exhausts the soldiers on the shore sands. The next task is against the walls and fortifications of Cyrene: though shut out, he avenges himself with no anger, and the only punishment for the conquered is that Cato conquered them.

Before actually plunging into the desert, the army needs preliminary training: what Cato does here is to channel his soldiers' wayward spirits into activity that is focused and

[29] Cato's march has traditionally been viewed as a straightforward contest between the Stoic sage and a hostile environment: see Aumont (1968), Ahl (1976) 252-74, Fantham (1992b) and Thomas (1982). This view has been challenged in recent years by the studies in n.1 above.

meaningful. Such training may be roughly Stoic (recall *marcet sine adversario virtus* from Sen. *De Prov.* 2.4 as quoted in Chapter 1), but it is also Caesarian in being based on needing an obstacle on which to expend one's spare energy: recall Caesar's Book 3 simile in which he indicates a need for an obstacle to stave off dissipation. *Non doctas ferre quietem* is the equivalent here, though instead of enervation, this phrase suggests a state of restlessness if the soldiers are not engaged in concrete tasks (much like the bees in the above simile).[30] Yet Cato wants to have his cake and eat it too: *exclusus nulla se vindicat ira* shows that he wants the benefits of being Caesarian without taking on the danger of irrationality. Is this possible? Lucan hedges the issue here, but later, just as Cato embarks on the desert trek proper, Lucan crosses this fine line: *impatiens virtus haerere Catonis / audet in ignotas agmen committere gentes* ("Cato's vigor, intolerant of lingering, dares to engage his troops against unknown nations," 9.371-72); such restless energy makes him uncomfortably Caesarian.[31] In fact, this is almost an exact recall of Caesar 3.453 as *impatiens haesuri ad moenia Martis* ("intolerant of war that would linger at the city-walls"). As Cato begins to immerse himself in the desert environment, we see distance opening up between his Book 2 self-conception (in many ways an unsustainable paradox now) of a passive *aristeia* and the reality of training for battle. His *virtus* is

[30] Wick (2004) 2.108 interprets *non doctas ferre quietem* as containing seeds of mutiny, which implies that Cato's activities are meant to stave off this possibility.

[31] Hershkowitz (1998) 238, who notes at n.165 the puzzling remark of Thomas (1982) 117 that *impatiens virtus haerere* equals *patientia*. Ahl (1976) 259 excuses Cato by contrasting *impatiens* with Caesar's *nescia virtus* (1.144), arguing that Cato at least is conscious of his activity; however, the adjective then shows he is incapable of, or at least not practicing, *patientia* in this instance. Wick (2004) 1.29-32 acknowledges Cato's similarities with Caesarian figures such as Vulteius and Scaeva, though she argues that he fundamentally differs from them due to his relatively small role (and in the end rejects entirely the negative interpretation of his character by Hershkowitz and Leigh). While acknowledging her observation, I draw a different conclusion—that Cato's inability to engage in formulaic behavior is what prevents his cause from succeeding, since the formula is the only vital force in the epic.

starting to shade into the Caesarian instead of the merely passive, rigidly enduring stance of the proper Stoic.

3. Cato and the Desert

The Syrtes as Symbol

The confusion is just beginning, though, for at this point Lucan introduces the Syrtes as Cato's first obstacle: *sed iter mediis natura vetabat / Syrtibus: hanc audax sperat sibi cedere virtus* ("but nature forbade a path, as the Syrtes were in the way: his bold vigor hopes that she will yield to him," 9.301-02). Again, this description of his *virtus* is very Caesarian in its coloring (note *audax*), since *sibi cedere* suggests an offensive, thrusting force worthy of Caesar. Interestingly, Lucan describes him thus just as he is about to face nature; the Syrtes section is reminiscent of Caesar's Book 5 boat trip, complete with storm.[32] Yet just what is this mysterious natural phenomenon?

> *Syrtes vel, primam mundo natura figuram*
> *cum daret, in dubio pelagi terraeque reliquit*
> *(nam neque subsedit penitus, quo stagna profundi*
> *acciperet, nec se defendit ab aequore tellus,*
> *ambigua sed lege loci iacet invia sedes…* (9.303-07)
>
> Either nature, when she gave the universe its original form, left the Syrtes wavering between land and sea (for the land neither sunk deeply enough so that it would receive the ocean's pools, nor did it defend itself from the sea, but due to the place's wavering condition, it lies, an impassable location…

Lucan's first theory is that the Syrtes have been a physical ambiguity from the creation of the universe. In that respect, they are broadly symbolic of a number of things discussed

[32] Hershkowitz (1998) 242 makes this comparison, though she cites the snake episode as the counterpart to Caesar and the storm.

so far: Pompey as caught between *libertas* and its absence, a world and a political system caught in limbo somewhere between republic and despotism, and of Cato himself as caught between Caesarian and Pompeian characteristics. Lucan's verdict for the Syrtes as a geographical anomaly is harsh: *sic male deseruit nullosque exegit in usus / hanc partem natura sui* ("thus nature badly abandoned this portion of herself and demanded no use from it," 9.310-11). Likewise, Pompey, as neither a true believer in *libertas* nor a full-blown despot, similarly consigned himself to uselessness. Now Cato claims to have made a clean break with this compromised Pompeian past (indeed he carries within him Pompey's already purified *umbra*). However, in an important sense he will also prove to be ineffective during the snake episode, neither living up to his Book 2 fantasy of sacrificing himself for the good of the group nor definitively instilling Stoic traits in his soldiers (nor even preventing Caesarian characteristics from creeping into them or indeed into himself). Even the status of the journey as Pompeian *fuga* will also be in doubt near the end of the book, as the soldiers complain in their last speech (9.863-65).

However, Lucan's second explanation is far more dynamic:

> *...vel plenior alto*
> *olim Syrtis erat pelago penitusque natabat,*
> *sed rapidus Titan ponto sua lumina pascens*
> *aequora subduxit zonae vicina perustae;*
> *et nunc pontus adhuc Phoebo siccante repugnat,*
> *mox, ubi damnosum radios admoverit aevum,*
> *tellus Syrtis erit; nam iam brevis unda superne*
> *innatat et late periturum deficit aequor.* (9.311-18)
>
> …or the Syrtes were once filled more by the sea's depth and swam deeply, but blazing Titan, feeding his light on the ocean, withdrew the waters near the scorching zone; and now the sea fights back even as Phoebus still dries it up; soon, when a harmful age brings closer its rays, the Syrtes will be land; for already shallow water floats on top and the sea is weakening, about to die all around.

This theory views the Syrtes as the site or fault line of a conflict between the sun and the ocean. We are now back in more familiar symbolic territory, as Lucan's habit of mirroring the civil war in the natural world is well-established.[33] The Syrtes in particular are another example of solar Caesarian force and aquatic resistance seen in the Pompey chapter (especially in the Phaethon digression at Brundisium in Book 2). Moreover, the link between the sun and Caesar is stronger here because of the sun's thirst for water; likewise, Caesar will thirst mentally for the Nile (recall how he speaks of himself as *mundique capacior hospes* at 10.183).[34] However, unlike the Po simile in Book 2, which suggested an optimistic outcome for Pompey, the future will belong to the sun. The victory of water works only in the mythological realm, especially in a land already so parched by the sun as Libya is. In fact, the last two lines describe the water already as mere shallows (*brevis unda superne*), which connects fittingly to the situation of the republic after Pharsalus. Even though Cato takes up the cause bravely, it is already an *umbra* of itself. The second theory of the Syrtes, then, is teleological in showing the eventual defeat and disappearance of water and, symbolically, the defeat of resistance to Caesar. As an environment almost completely dominated by the sun, the desert is thus a landscape that is completely Caesarian (the soldiers will later complain that the snakes they face fight in place of Caesar) and thus perfectly hostile to Cato.

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[33] E.g. by Schönberger (1960) 81, König (1970), Bramble (1982) 537-38, and Walde (2007) 42. This correspondence between human and natural states is a key Stoic tenet, as Sen. *Thy.* 790ff shows (among many such examples in Senecan tragedy).

[34] In addition, the sun here is described as *rapidus*, another characteristic of Caesar (cf. *rapido…actu* at 9.31). Regarding the Caesarian dynamic, sun's devouring of the water is a new (and late) way for Caesarian forces to defeat their watery adversaries—this time through a stealthier method than that of direct confrontation. Not only does this theory foreshadow the Nile episode, but also the way in which the venom of the *dipsas* engulfs Aules' bodily moisture at 9.743-45.

The Desert Proper

After enduring a storm stirred up by a Caesarian south wind (*in sua regna furens*, "raging against its own kingdoms," 9.321, just as the Caesarian thunderbolt did at 1.155) and passing through the marsh of Triton (9.348-67), the survivors find themselves at the entrance to the desert proper.[35] It is significant that at this point Gnaeus, who has been accompanying Cato, chooses to stay behind in a more favorable environment (*sed duce Pompeio Libyae melioris in oris / mansit* [*classis*], "but with Pompey as leader [the fleet] remained in Libya's better coast," 9.370-71). Pompey's sons have no place in the desert (they in fact stay near water, just like their father was associated with this element), which is the ideal training ground for Cato:

> *at impatiens virtus haerere Catonis*
> *audet in ignotas agmen committere gentes*
> *armorum fidens et terra cingere Syrtim.* (9.371-73)
>
> Cato's vigor, intolerant of lingering, dares to engage his troops against unknown nations and, trusting in his arms, to encircle the Syrtes on land.

The first line was quoted earlier, but deserves to be referenced again in its context. Juxtaposed with Gnaeus' decision to stay near the coast, Cato's *virtus* stands out in greater contrast. As stated earlier, *impatiens…haerere* is virtually full-blown Caesarian behavior. This is inevitable, however, since Cato is now a military commander. Unlike his Book 2 vision of remaining perfectly passive on a civil war battlefield and receiving blows from every side, Cato now seems almost to revel in the chance for offensive action (9.372). Again, the necessity of commanding an army seems automatically to require Caesarian traits if one is to be successful.

[35] Ahl (1976) 260-62 points out that Cato's landing at the Garden of the Hesperides is significant because, by describing Hercules' theft of the golden apples (9.365-67), Lucan shows that Cato comes across as superior to this greatest of all mythical heroes. Yet the despoiled grove also serves as a potent symbol of Cato's sterility and the republic's barren hopes.

One of the ironies of the whole desert voyage is that the appearance of the storm influences the decision to embark on it:

> *hoc eadem suadebat hiemps quae clauserat aequor;*
> *et spes imber erat nimios metuentibus ignes,*
> *ut neque sole viam nec duro frigore saevam*
> *inde polo Libyes, hinc bruma temperet annus*. (9.374-77)
>
> The same winter that had blocked the sea was recommending this; and to those fearing excessive fire, rain gave hope that the season would moderate their journey, fierce with neither the sun nor harsh chill because of Libya's sky on one side and the winter on the other.

Metuentibus refers to Cato's men, who welcome the desert as shelter from the storm, then in the very next line wish for some residual rain to offset the desert heat. In other words, what they hope for is a temperate zone formed from a clash between wet and dry elements—in other words a temporary Syrtes. However, just as the Syrtes will one day become entirely land, the soldiers will soon head into the deep desert, where temperateness gives way to the extremeness of the snakes and of the symptoms caused by their venom. Just as the temperate zone is itself ephemeral, so will the wish for order and calm prove to be fruitless.

Cato's speech makes it plain that he wants no balance. He summarizes the travails of the desert in 9.382-84 (dryness, sterility, overwhelming heat, and an abundance of snakes), then concludes that this is the *durum iter ad leges patriaeque ruentis amorem* ("harsh path to laws and love of a collapsing fatherland," 9.385). Lucan thus subtly suggests again that Cato and his men are not on the same page. Cato knows this, of course, and that is exactly why he is taking them on this march—to train them. But, we might ask, for what exactly? Is the *iter* a physical journey? No, but instead a

journey into the abstract: to *leges* and *amorem patriae*, not to the literal *patria*, which is already *ruens*. In other words, he is not taking them on a *fuga* towards a defined location. Since the *patria* is collapsing (or has already), there is no physical goal either:

> *per mediam Libyen veniant atque invia temptent,*
> *si quibus in nullo positum est evadere voto,*
> *si quibus ire sat est.* (9.386-88)
>
> Whoever believe that escape is not to be prayed for, whoever are satisfied to proceed, let them go through Libya's midst and attempt the impassable.

The journey is the destination, because the "destination" may very well be death. *Invia* is the key word here; they will be trying to cross a land that is by definition impassable. Likewise, line 9.387 means the possibility of no escape. This is a *fuga* that is simultaneously not one, for a successful flight usually requires the fastest and easiest path to a safe destination. On the other hand, Cato's description of this voyage has a formulaic quality: they will be "penetrating" the impossible (*invia temptent*) in order to toughen themselves up.

Yet what is the value of all this training if they might never leave? Significant, especially in light of the snake episode, is the sentiment *hi mihi sint comites, quos ipsa pericula ducent, / qui me teste pati vel quae tristissima pulchrum / Romanumque putant* ("let these be my companions who are attracted by the dangers themselves, who think it noble and Roman to suffer even what is most grim, with me as witness," 9.390-92). For Cato, the desert will serve as a closed-off environment in which he can observe and approve of his men's ordeals at the cost of their death. This, then, is seemingly the only value of their suffering. It is true that, in order for the training to work properly, Cato must be able to observe his soldiers' bravery and fortitude so as to recognize that they have achieved these qualities. However, the act of observance puts Cato in the role of

spectator instead of the "active sufferer" role in his Book 2 speech, exposing him to the dangers of Caesarian passive spectatorship.[36]

Thus Cato's return to the rhetorical posturing of his Book 2 speech strikes the reader as ridiculous in light of what is to come: *fatoque pericula vestra / praetemptate meo* ("and test first your danger by my fate," 9.397-98) is useless because nothing actually happens to him. Thus, his men have no example to which they might refer when the snakes do strike those unfortunate few; the moral instruction fails because the actual situation is its inverse. His statement *si quo fuerit discrimine notum / dux an miles eam* ("if it is known by some crisis whether I go as a general or soldier," 9.401-02) will be proven both right and wrong: Cato does not want to be an autocratic commander, but the snake episode will distance his rigid principles from the senseless slaughter, while at the same time reveal him to be no leader at all in his lack of response to the attacks. No matter how much he exhorts them that all the coming plagues will be *dulcia virtuti* ("pleasant for virtue," 9.403), Lucan later gives little indication that they have learned anything.[37] However, Cato's speech does succeed in firing them up: *sic ille paventis / incendit virtute animos et amore laborum* ("thus he inflamed their fearful minds with virtue and love of toil," 9.406-07). Hershkowitz interprets their reaction as madness; [38] while I would not go quite that far, *incendit* does indicate a hint of Caesarian emotion creeping in.[39] Such a result is inevitable, however, because Cato has revitalized them,

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[36] The desire for Vulteius' and Scaeva's actions to be seen also underpins their respective episodes, thus bringing Cato closer to Caesarian figures in another aspect.

[37] See Sklenář (2003) 88-89 for Cato's conception of *virtus* here.

[38] Hershkowitz (1998) 237-38.

[39] Lucan uses *incendo* to describe Caesar's lust at the sight of Egyptian riches (10.148).

which in Lucan's poem is only possible through a formulaic framework: one cannot have the benefits of the formula without absorbing its darker aspects.

Thus, the snake episode will show Cato's Stoic (and quasi-Caesarian) training as invalid next to the truly Caesarian snakes. In closing, he turns to the Pompeian aspect of the voyage: *sola potest Libye turba praestare malorum / ut deceat fugisse viros* ("Libya alone, because of its medley of evils, can make it so that is proper for men to flee," 9.405-06). Though he castigated the anonymous soldier above for wishing *fuga*, Cato now ends his speech by admitting to this fact. However, this *fuga* is no ordinary flight in shame, but because of the *turba…malorum*, it is now honorable. Again, Cato is trying to maintain a balance between the Pompeian and Stoic aspects of the journey: a march *from* (*fuga*) versus a journey *to*. Perhaps appropriately, the final lines of this section treat a Pompeian theme: *et sacrum parvo nomen clausura sepulchro / invasit Libye securi fata Catonis* ("and Libya, intending to confine his holy name in a narrow coffin, attacked the destiny of carefree Cato," 9.409-10). As Cato suggested in his speech, Libya might well serve to entomb his men. But as the narrator has already shown in his eulogy to Pompey, the *nomen*, being incorporeal, cannot be enclosed. He may die physically, but, like Pompey, his *nomen* will be eternal and overflowing. Thus, his death would be a spiritual victory. Cato himself will bring this theme to its climax at the shrine of Jupiter Ammon.

Formulaic Characteristics of Libya

Before the actual journey begins, Lucan introduces the geography of Libya, just as he did for the Syrtes. Libya's outstanding feature is its lack of natural resources except for Maurusian timber, which the locals do not exploit but use for shade (9.426-28). Thus,

it has been argued that Libya's poverty is of a piece with Cato's austere nature.[40] However, this comes at a steep price:

> *at, quaecumque vagam Syrtim complectitur ora*
> *sub nimio proiecta die, vicina perusti*
> *aetheris, exurit messes et pulvere Bacchum*
> *enecat et nulla putris radice tenetur.*
> *temperies vitalis abest, et nulla sub illa*
> *cura Iovis terra est; natura deside torpet*
> *orbis et immotis annum non sentit harenis*. (9.431-37)
>
> Whatever coast embraces the wandering Syrtes, cast under excessive daylight, next to the burnt ether, scorches crops and annihilates Bacchus with its dust, and crumbling, is held fast by no roots. Life-giving moderation is absent, and Jupiter has no concern for that land; the region is sluggish from idle nature and it does not feel the year's course, its sands unmoved.

Austerity means barrenness or a lack of life-giving properties. This is due to the unnatural predominance of the sun; because of its overwhelming heat, the land has been cowed into a state of total lethargy (*natura deside torpet / orbis*); in formulaic terms, it is in a state of total dormancy. Moreover, Jupiter has abandoned this landscape (figuratively, for lack of rain), just as he has abandoned Rome. Since we have seen in the Syrtes section that the sun exhibits Caesarian properties, the conclusion is that if we continue the analogy with Cato, he too, or his cause, must also be at its lowest ebb, and must also be sterile.

At the same time, Cato can hardly be described as *deses*; his speech indicates that it is precisely because of the harshness of the desert that Cato finds it an ideal training ground for his men. The harder Caesar (as an elemental force) bears down on Cato, the more fiercely and stubbornly he will resist. In this respect, Cato and Caesarism are codependent, which takes us back to the Stoic counterpart of the formula at *De Prov* 2.4.

[40] Thomas (1982), esp. 115-17.

If Cato shares Libya's barrenness, he certainly does not share its total passivity in the face of solar domination.

Likewise, the Nasamonians also occupy an ambivalent status:

> *hoc tam segne solum raras tamen exerit herbas,*
> *quas Nasamon, gens dura, legit, qui proxima ponto*
> *nudus rura tenet; quem mundi barbara damnis*
> *Syrtis alit. nam litoreis populator harenis*
> *imminet et nulla portus tangente carina*
> *novit opes: sic cum toto commercia mundo*
> *naufragiis Nasamones habent*. (9.438-44)
>
> This soil, so inactive, still produces the occasional grass which the Nasamonian picks, a hardy race, who naked inhabits the fields nearest the sea; him the barbarous Syrtes feed from the world's losses. For as a plunderer he threatens the sands of the shore and is acquainted with wealth although no ship touches the ports: thus do the Nasamonians hold traffic with the entire world through shipwreck.

This nation can endure much (*dura*), like Cato, but they also must be scavengers due to the barrenness of their home, thus feeding off the wreckage and debris that is discarded by the rest of the world. *Naufragiis* in fact describes Cato and the republican cause quite well: Lucan had labeled the panicked flight from Rome in Book 1 a *naufragium* (1.503). Moreover, Pompey also used both *commercia* and *naufragium* when musing about travelling beyond the ends of the earth and beyond human contact (8.312-13). Like Pompey and the remnants of the senate, Cato and his men are also fragments, but he is more successful than the former in cutting off human contact. However, even though he has no contact with the Nasamonians, these tribesmen are a natural product of the Libyan environment that would live off Cato and his army and thus foreshadow the snakes, who quite literally do feed on his army.

Just as the sun is able to rage unchecked in the Libyan landscape, the wind encounters no resistance either:

nam litore sicco,
quam pelago, Syrtis violentius excipit Austrum,
et terrae magis ille nocens. non montibus ortum
adversis frangit Libye scopulisque repulsum
dissipat et liquidas e turbine solvit in auras,
nec ruit in silvas annosaque robora torquens
lassatur: patet omne solum, liberque meatu
Aeoliam rabiem totis exercet harenis,
et non imbriferam contorto pulvere nubem
in flexum violentus agit: pars plurima terrae
tollitur et numquam resoluto vertice pendet. (9.447-57)

For the Syrtes receive the Auster more violently on dry shore than on sea, and the latter is more harmful on land. Libya does not break it with facing mountains as it rises, nor does it repel and disperse it with cliffs nor break it up from a whirlwind into flowing breeze, nor does the wind rush onto forests and exhausts itself from twisting aged oaks: the entire ground lies open, and the Auster, free to wander, exerts Aeolian wrath on all its sands, and it violently drives into a curve a cloud that brings no rain, its dust twisting; the majority of the land is lifted up and hangs, the whirlwind never undone.

In this magnificent description of the Auster's effect on Libya, it is helpful to recall Caesar's Book 3 simile of himself as a raging wind. There, he informed the reader of his secret weakness: that without an obstacle, his energy would weaken and eventually come to nothing. Here, however, the Auster is all the fiercer precisely because there are no natural features in the desert that might block it. In contrast to the normal formula, which operates on a normal environment, in Libya we seem to have a hyper-Caesarian force, a true *plus quam*: even with the resistance of the landscape fully cowed, the wind keeps raging—in fact, all the more strongly. The Caesarian dynamic has triumphed definitively here, having no need for regeneration and thus for a cycle: there is no end to its domination. We might compare this situation to Caesar after Pharsalus, in which he occupies the entire world, thus leaving only the fringes to Cato.

The effects of the Caesarian wind upon the landscape also merit closer scrutiny:

> *tum quoque Romanum solito violentior agmen*
> *aggreditur, nullisque potest consistere miles*
> *instabilis, raptis etiam quas calcat, harenis.*
> *concuteret terras orbemque a sede moveret,*
> *si solida Libye compage et pondere duro*
> *clauderet exesis Austrum scopulosa cavernis;*
> *sed, quia mobilibus facilis turbatur harenis,*
> *nusquam luctando stabilis manet, imaque tellus*
> *stat, quia summa fugit*. (9.463-71)
>
> Then, more violently than usual, it also attacks the Roman column, and the tottering soldiers can stand on no sand, since what they trod on is also snatched away. Auster would shake the land and move the earth from its location, if craggy Libya, with a solid framework and rigid weight, were to constrain it with hollow caverns; but because it is easily disturbed with its moving sands, by struggling nowhere it remains stable. The lowest part of the earth stays still because its surface flees.

Remarkably, what Brutus spoke of figuratively in Book 2 has now been made reality: instead of wavering principles, Cato is now wading deep into a fluid world where Caesarian power (both solar and wind) is so strong as to keep the entire landscape permanently unstable.[41] Contrary to what the previous passage leads us to expect, these lines show that letting the wind run amok has its advantages. Apparently, if Libya actually had prominent natural features, their resistance would so evenly match the wind's force that neither would be able to overcome the other, but the result would be the destruction of the earth, or at least this part of it: *compage* here recalls *compage soluta* of ἐκπύρωσις at 1.72. In other words, the meeting of an unstoppable force and an immovable object results only in total destruction of the environment. Instead, it is better to shift and flow like the sand in the face of overwhelming force. Formulaically speaking, since Libya has no mountains, it does not bring out the full force of the wind to

[41] Morford (1996) 49 notes the influence from sea-storms here, as well as scientific studies of earthquakes, as at Sen. *NQ* 5.14.1.

target one prominent feature. Thus, by not being too obviously resistant, the full force of Caesarian wrath can be dodged.

Far from the bleak environment of total wind domination suggested by 9.449-454, on closer observation Libya can still maintain a sort of accommodation with it. In keeping with the symbolic interpretation of the Libyan landscape elsewhere, I read this passage in political terms. The message is not one-dimensional, however: ostensibly the Libya of Lucan's imagination is a critique of Cato's character, for *durus* is practically one of his epithets. Yet at the same time, his journey is also an extended *fuga*, as Cato put it himself, just as the sands flee the wind's wrath. The last sentence is telling, for it encapsulates the dilemma of the republican cause after Pharsalus: outward compliance or *fuga* combined with inward solidity. This is a strikingly similar pose to the hidden resistance of Brutus or the advice of Cotta to Metellus in Book 3: *"libertas" inquit "populi quem regna coercent / libertate perit; cuius servaveris umbram, / si quidquid iubeare velis* ("he says, 'the freedom of a people whom despotism constrains perishes through freedom; you preserve its shadow if you do willingly whatever you are ordered to do,'" 3.145-47). Just as the Libyan land preserves its form beneath the surface, the dissident republicans can only preserve liberty by "rebelling" in their mind. As for Cato, he may be fleeing deep into the desert, but at the same time he is toughening up his soldiers.

As the sandstorm continues, the soldiers are gradually buried by the sand (*atque* [*Auster*] *operit tellure viros*, "and [the Auster] conceals the men with earth," 9.486). Finally, Lucan caps off the section with his usual inversion of subject and object: instead of describing the sand as blowing over the men, it is as if the earth were somehow rising

to swallow them up: *immoti terra surgente tenentur* ("they are held down immobile by the rising earth," 9.489). The landscape of Libya is literally engulfing them; they are disappearing into the desert. The symbolic significance of this burial is indicated by *iamque iter omne latet nec sunt discrimina terrae* ("and now every path is hidden, nor does the earth have distinctions," 9.493). Cato wanted his journey to be a *fuga* for the purposes of hiding from Caesar, but they are getting close to actually being sucked into oblivion. In other words, this is another reified metaphor such as that which Brutus mentioned in his Book 2 speech: here, the figurative hiding of the vanquished (seen since Caesar's sweep past Ariminum in Book 1) threatens to be realized in the live burial of Cato's army. Also, the disappearance of *discrimina* in the landscape once again emphasizes the fundamental instability of the desert, which threatens to overwhelm the rigid Cato. This word in particular also shows the remarkable conceptual transformation that is occurring in Libya: the lack of *discrimina* and boundaries are well-established motifs representing the confusion and instability that civil war brings in Lucan.[42] However, we are seeing that it has its benefits (however small) for the landscape, if not for Cato and his men. On a large-scale level, Cato does abide by these principles (recall 9.30-33), choosing to flee to a location where hopefully Caesar cannot reach him. However, once inside this location, his fixed condition is not doing him any favors.

[42] Especially Henderson (1987) and Masters (1992) 1-5; Bartsch (1997) 13-48 focuses in particular on the various ways in which the human body's boundaries are violated.

Cato at the Oracle of Jupiter Ammon

All of the hardship thus far leads to Cato's speech at the sanctuary of Jupiter Hammon.[43] Scholars have debated whether Cato could actually have reached the shrine at all, which is far to the east of his route.[44] In addition, other sources describe the god as endowed with costly materials.[45] Instead, Lucan's Hammon is *pauper* ("poor," 9.519); the poet even contrasts him with Roman *luxuria* (*morumque priorum / numen Romano templum defendit ab auro*, "and a deity of earlier morals, he defends his temple from Roman gold," 9.520-21). The similarity of this description to Cato suggests that Lucan was creating a deliberate parallel to highlight their common austerity. However, as is clear by now, any comparison is never as simple as it seems:

> *esse locis superos testatur silva per omnem*
> *sola virens Libyen. nam quidquid pulvere sicco*
> *separat ardentem tepida Berenicida Lepti*
> *ignorat frondes: solus nemus abstulit Hammon*. (9.522-25)
>
> The forest, the only verdant one in all Libya, is testament that there are gods in this place. For whatever separates burning Berenicis with its dry dust from warm Leptis does not know leaves: Ammon alone has taken away the grove.

The presence of an oasis in the desert should signify the blessing of Jupiter on this part of the parched land and a safe zone from the oppressive Caesarian heat. However, this vegetation comes at a price: *solus nemus abstulit Hammon*. Jupiter can only maintain the conditions for life here by denying them (and thus the water to sustain them) elsewhere.

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[43] Morford (1967) 124 and Bexley (2009) 471 observe that this episode occurs at the midpoint of Cato's journey.

[44] Pichon (1912) 37. Aumont (1968) 316 agrees, noting the extreme distance of Siwa from Cyrene (about 550 km).

[45] Aumont (1968) 316 quotes Curt. Ruf. 4.7: *smaragdo et gemmis coagmentatus* ("constructed from emerald and other gems").

Lucan is drawing a subtle contrast to the previous section, in which Cato refuses to drink the water offered by one of his soldiers: *quanto poena tu dignior ista es, / qui populo sitiente bibas!* ("how much more are you worthy of that punishment, you who would drink while the people are thirsty!" 9.508-09).[46] Instead of hoarding water for himself like Ammon, Cato pours it into the sand and thus shares his men's thirst (9.509-10). If we look ahead to Book 10, a contrast between the god and the Nile may also be drawn: while Ammon hoards water and thus contributes to the barrenness of its surrounding conditions, the river freely shares its water to nourish the surrounding landscape. Unlike the Nile, whose "divine" presence grants water, this god keeps whatever water may be available for himself.

Lucan thus sets the stage for Cato's rejection of the oracle by first distancing him implicitly from the figure of Ammon.[47] In addition, Cato's refusal also sets him apart from Appius and Sextus Pompey, who go through great lengths to hear prophecies that prove to be of little worth.[48] On the contrary, Cato derives all he needs to know from faith in a Stoic Jupiter. Thus, Labienus' arguments for consultation are weak: his suggestion *tanto duce possumus uti / per Syrtes* ("we can utilize such a great leader through the Syrtes," 9.552-53) is impossible because Cato has already carved out such a dominating presence for himself. In addition, the sentiment *nam cui crediderim superos*

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[46] This episode is modeled on the Alexander tradition: see Arrian *Anab.* 6.26, Plut. *Alex.* 42, and Curt. Ruf. 7.5. For the influence of Alexander narratives on Lucan's Cato, see Vögler (1968) 247-49, Rutz (1970), Ahl (1976) 271-73, and Maes (2009).

[47] I thus cannot agree with Bexley's (2009) 469-73 argument that Cato and Ammon are counterparts. While they do share the characteristic of being isolated, she seems to miss the distance that Cato puts between himself and the god (9.572) as well as the radically different natures of Hammon and of Cato's conception of Jupiter. Instead she asserts that Cato becomes the oracle, so that when he rejects it, he risks rejecting himself—a rather unconvincing line of argument.

[48] Ahl (1976) 262 notes the similarity of these figures to Cato, at least before he rejects the oracle. For Appius' and Sextus' consultations, see Dick (1965), Ahl (1976) 121-49, O'Higgins (1988), Masters (1992) 106-49 and 179-215, and Hardie (1993) 108-09.

arcana daturos / dicturosque magis quam sancto vera Catoni? ("for to whom could I believe the gods would give their secrets and speak the truth more than to sacred Cato?" 9.554-55) is rather obtuse, given how often Lucan attaches sanctity or divinity every time he mentions Cato by name (Labienus even calls Cato *sanctus* here!).[49] Thus, Cato has no need of being inspired by the god (*tua pectora sacra / voce reple*, "fill your breast with sacred voice," 9.561-62), for he will shortly reveal that he is already imbued with the Stoic Jupiter.[50]

Cato's Speech at the Oracle: A Model of Overflowing

Just before he makes the speech, Lucan describes Cato as *ille deo plenus tacita quem mente gerebat / effudit dignas adytis e pectore voces* ("that man, full of the god whom he carried about in his silent thoughts, pours forth from his breast a voice worthy of sanctuaries," 9.564-65). Such a description is more than simply hagiographical, but it also provides the clearest link between Cato and the formula: quite simply, the god is Cato's core, which he will soon release in his speech. Because Pompey's *umbra* has entered Cato, however, it in effect merges with the god. Cato's description of Jupiter answers this question:

> *haeremus cuncti superis, temploque tacente*
> *nil facimus non sponte dei; nec vocibus ullis*
> *numen eget, dixitque semel nascentibus auctor*
> *quidquid scire licet. sterilesne elegit harenas*
> *ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum,*
> *estque dei sedes nisi terra et pontus et aer*

[49] Sklenář (2003) 91-92.

[50] Dick (1965) 466 sees *deo plenus* as equivalent to ἔνθεος, thus suggesting that Cato is already a seer. Ahl (1976) 266 interestingly suggests that Cato also rejects the oracle because it would associate him too closely with Africa, the enemy of Rome. I would add that Cato thereby also rejects Caesarian influence, given how closely Caesarian figures are tied to Africa; this meshes well with his espousal of a Jupiter that behaves like Pompey's *umbra*.

> *et caelum et virtus? superos quid quaerimus ultra?*
> *Iuppiter est quodcumque vides, quodcumque moveris*. (9.573-80)
>
> All of us are attached to the gods, and although the temple is silent, we do nothing without the will of the god; nor does divinity need any voice, and the creator has spoken to us once at our birth whatever it is we are permitted to know. Did he choose barren sands that he might prophesy to a few, and did he bury the truth in this dust, and does God have a dwelling other than the earth and sea and air and heaven and virtue? Why do we seek gods beyond him? Jupiter is whatever you see and whatever moves you.

Cato describes Jupiter in terms virtually identical to how the narrator described Pompey's liberated soul at the end of Book 8. His supreme god is an all-pervading *pneuma*, as was Pompey's.[51] The Stoic Jupiter is not "entombed" within a shrine in a barren land, but just like Pompey's *umbra* and *nomen*, it fills every available vacuum; yet in proper Stoic fashion, it is also inherent in each human breast (just as Pompey's *umbra* dwells within Cato). *Ultra* can be taken both literally and figuratively, for there can be literally nothing outside the Stoic Jupiter, as he fills all space in the cosmos; the contrast with the hidden Ammon could not be greater. This infinite spreading of Jupiter, perhaps even more than Cato's eventual martyrdom, constitutes his true act of resistance in the face of Caesar's overwhelming presence, as it is here that he most clearly and decisively announces his continuation of Pompeian spiritual overflow. As Caesar has flooded physical and political space, so Jupiter pervades the rest of the universe.[52] Cato continues his speech by posing rhetorical questions that Labienus would have him ask of Jupiter Ammon, only to reject them:

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[51] Seewald (2008) 320, citing Sen. *NQ* 1, *praef*. 13-14.

[52] If one accepts Seewald's (2008) 320-21 rendering of *quodcumque moveris* in physical terms (i.e. the *pneuma* is the sole force that grants motion to all material in the cosmos), then Cato is actually offering a Stoic counterpart to the Caesarian formula as a vital force that enables him to continue his desert journey. However, such a solution to the problem of regeneration without utilizing the formula proves useless in the snake episode and afterwards.

> *an noceat vis nulla bono Fortunaque perdat*
> *opposita virtute minas, laudandaque velle*
> *sit satis et numquam successu crescat honestum?* (9.569-71)
>
> Or does no violence harm the good man and Fortune waste its threats when virtue is resisting, and whether it is enough to wish for commendable things and that what is worthy never increases from success?

Fortuna is linked closely to Caesar, but Cato declares its impotence next to *virtus*. In addition, line 9.571 can be contrasted with Lucan's description of Caesar as *successus urguere suos* (1.148). For Cato, *honestum* is purely moral or ethical, and thus cannot be increased or diminished by material gain or loss, while the Book 1 phrase encapsulates the unstoppable momentum of Caesarian spreading throughout the physical world.[53]

And yet the circumstances of this infinite Jupiter also reveal deep affinities with the formula, namely the Caesarian core. Lucan's insistence that Cato is a sort of living oracle is the counterpart to the *numen* that Scaeva's comrades believe lives within his breast. In this sense, he is spiritually nourished because of Jupiter's omnipresence, which "regenerates" him just as the earth did Antaeus (note the presence of Jupiter in the earth as well). And *noceat vis nulla bono* presupposes an equal or greater force, even if immobile, in the body of the *sapiens*: there is certainly no Pompeian *fuga* here. In part, this is because the model of Pompeian overflow is itself derived from the physical flooding of rivers, and thus it shares basic similarities with Caesarian breakthrough.

Of course, one would hope that Cato's is the light to Scaeva's dark, but as Cato's angry outbursts have shown, it is disturbingly easy for him to succumb to Caesarian moods. Yet there remains one crucial difference: the core that formulaic beings (including rivers) possess is physical, which allows them repeatedly to revive themselves,

[53] Dick (1967) 239-40 sees Cato as discarding *fortuna* in favor of *fatum* here.

while Cato's is immaterial (the Stoic Jupiter and Pompey's *umbra*). This is not to say that Cato is himself any less resilient, of course, but that the lofty sentiments he expresses in his speech have no further place in the journey, least of all in the snake episode. Again, this shows the impossibility of resistance in the physical world because of Caesar's total domination of it. Cato may confidently proclaim that *me non oracula certum / sed mors certa facit* ("not oracles, but certain death makes me certain," 9.582-83), or in other words, that death means nothing to him because of his reliance on a Jupiter who thoroughly pervades him, but this is true only in a mental or emotional sense; he is obviously not granted physical immortality thereby. On the other hand, the Nile can resist Caesar (even though, interestingly enough, he only encounters it in verbal form) because its own hidden core or *caput* is tangible and real, allowing it to actually revive itself each time after it overflows.

However, for all his repudiation of Ammon's isolation, Cato is revealed to be just as lonely a figure in the narrator's apostrophe following his speech:

> *si veris magna paratur*
> *fama bonis et si successu nuda remoto*
> *inspicitur virtus, quidquid laudamus in ullo*
> *maiorum, Fortuna fuit. quis Marte secundo,*
> *quis tantum meruit populorum sanguine nomen?*
> *hunc ego per Syrtes Libyaeque extrema triumphum*
> *ducere maluerim, quam ter Capitolia curru*
> *scandere Pompei, quam frangere colla Iugurthae.* (9.593-600)
>
> If great renown comes from true good and if virtue is viewed bare when success is removed, whatever we praise in any of our ancestors was fortune. Who earned such a great name in favorable warfare, who by the blood of peoples? I would prefer to lead this triumph through the Syrtes and Libya's margins than to climb the Capitol three times in Pompey's chariot or to break Jugurtha's neck.

Here we see the narrator continuing the trend of divesting from earthly achievements (begun when Pompey retreated from Pharsalus in Book 7). He goes farther here, even counting the achievements of the venerated *maiores* as nothing if fortune were involved. He strips *virtus* of its traditional association with military glory altogether, opting for a purely moral connotation.[54] In a final demolishing of republican trappings, the narrator even declares that he would prefer to conduct a triumph through the desert instead of accompanying Pompey at Rome.[55] Of course, a triumph anywhere besides the city is unimaginable, but given that Rome is now occupied by Caesar, it has thus lost legitimacy. By endowing the desert with such a central Roman institution, the narrator thus makes it the "true" Rome.[56] Yet this replacement Rome is not only literally immaterial as a product of the narrator's imagination, but also completely barren like Cato. Instead of a return in triumph to Rome, there is only continued withdrawal leading to a spiritual "victory" on the margins of the world. The reference to Pompey again contrasts the living but flawed leader with the carrier of his purified *umbra*; in a sense, the narrator's vision is the culmination of Pompeian *fuga* as continued by Cato. The syntax is important as well: notice that the narrator names himself as the leader of the

[54] For Cato's conception of *virtus* here, see Sklenář (2003) 99.

[55] It is striking for the narrator to insert himself suddenly into this encomium, when both before and (9.587-93) and after the passage quoted here (*ecce parens verus patriae*, "behold the true father of our country," 9.601) he is clearly referring to Cato. In addition, since *ducere* means to lead or escort the triumph (*OLD* 7a), the poet is not part of the procession, but is inserting himself as the *vir triumphalis*. Lucan may have been influenced by Vergil *Geo.* 3.22-23, where the poet casts himself as a triumphing general in the mold of Augustus; see Thomas (1988) 36-37. In both cases, the poet seems to blend into the statesman: this is even more the case in Lucan, whose narrative voice, as we have seen, is crucial for Pompey's legacy. The possibility of *hunc* as a pronoun referring to Cato instead of going with *triumphum* (and *ecce* at 9.601 perhaps a visual cue?) contributes to a sense of merging.

[56] Wells (1992) 26 notes briefly that the triumph could only be legitimately celebrated at Rome; see also Sumi (2005) 29-41 for the importance of the triumph to Roman political life. In a sense, the desert is now the site for real Roman *virtus*, not Rome itself, which is now occupied by Caesar; the narrator calls Cato *parens verus patriae* ("true father of his country," 9.601) and worthy to be a god, in implicit contrast to the Caesar now deified.

triumph, instead of Cato. Just as he does with Pompey in Book 8, the narrator imagines himself as Cato, inserting his own voice into one of the anti-Caesarian figures. The narrator and Cato are one, and both are united with the landscape. At least here, Cato and the desert are made for each other in all their magnificent but sterile isolation.[57] Just before the snakes radically deform Cato's men, Lucan poignantly juxtaposes an all-embracing universal vision of the deity with the extreme isolation of its prophet. The result is a clear picture of Cato's fundamental ambivalence.

4. Cato and the Snakes

Introduction

By placing the Hammon episode next to the snake episode, Lucan thus separates Cato's desert voyage into two distinct parts. Everything before line 9.604, save the desert storm, served to build Cato up as the champion of a revived and redefined republican cause, with the climax being his speech at the Hammonium. Everything that follows will now serve as the fiercest onslaught against the validity of that leadership. The snakes, as offspring of Medusa and Libya (and thus deeply Caesarian), will shock Cato back from his splendid isolation.

But first, the army encounters them in a rather more innocent setting:

> *inventus mediis fons unus harenis*
> *largus aquae, sed quem serpentum turba tenebat*
> *vix capiente loco; stabant in margine siccae*
> *aspides, in mediis sitiebant dipsades undis*. (9.607-10)

[57] The narrator's scenario thus clashes with Cato's own Book 2 fantasy *aristeia*, since there is no one to view his glory, as opposed to his own vision of *devotio*.

> One fountain with plenty of water was found in the middle of the desert, but which was inhabited by a bunch of snakes hardly contained by the place; parched asps were placed on the edge, and dipsads were thirsty in the middle of the water.

The water here is tempting because they have reached a hotter zone (*iam spissior ignis*, "and now the fire was denser," 9.604). Even though it is filled with snakes, Cato declares that it is safe and ostentatiously drinks from it (9.612-18). However, the real point of interest here is the phrase *vix capiente loco*. Once again, Lucan uses *capio* in the formulaic sense of "contain": out of all the other formulaic uses of the verb, the image of this well filled to bursting with poisonous snakes fits most closely Lucan's ominous image of civil war at Dyrrhachium: *hic capitur sanguis terras fluxurus in omnis* (6.63).[58] There, the poet compares the city to a pool or lake of blood that would spill its contents into the rest of the known world. Therefore, Lucan links the snakes not only to this concept of civil war overflow (thus confirming that the snakes are a continuation, if fragmented, of civil war after Pharsalus), but also subtly countering Cato's spiritual overflow of Jupiter with a deadly physical overflow. Placing them in water also allows him easily to merge the snake overflow with the aquatic model. However, the snakes bring their own liquid—poison—to this model, thus co-opting the aquatic model of Caesarian resistance back into Caesarian violence and death. They might be safe in their confined space, but soon they will be spreading venom amongst his men: as Cato explains, *noxia serpentum est admixto sanguine pestis* ("the serpents' venom is harmful when mixed with blood," 9.614).

[58] Lucan uses *capere* in this physical sense elsewhere at 1.111, 2.153, 7.402, 7.818, 8.816, and 9.800, several instances of which have been discussed in Chapter 4.

Excursus on Medusa

In the meantime, though, Lucan embarks on the Medusa excursus, which serves to explain the origin of these Libyan serpents. Together with the snake battle, this section can be interpreted as a gigantic parody of formulaic motifs. Most generally, the *caput* motif, introduced of course with Pompey's murder (and which is an undercurrent to Caesar's Nile quest), becomes grotesquely distorted in Medusa's severed head.[59] There is much more, however:

> *quem, qui recto se lumine vidit,*
> *passa Medusa mori est? rapuit dubitantia fata*
> *praevenitque metus; anima periere retenta*
> *membra, nec emissae riguere sub ossibus umbrae.* (9.638-41)
>
> Whom did Medusa allow to die if he viewed her directly? She hurried along doubtful fate and anticipated fear; their limbs perished while the soul was detained, and their shades, not released, hardened beneath their bones.

Just as the narrator does not allow Pompey's *umbra* to truly die, neither does Medusa. However, instead of releasing them into the ether, her gaze entraps them in their petrified bodies. They are in effect a perverted version of the core, eternally stuck inside their bodies without being able to initiate regeneration.[60]

When Perseus succeeds in decapitating Medusa, the poet offers up a deadly version of another *caput*:

> *quos habuit vultus hamati vulnere ferri*
> *caesa caput Gorgon! quanto spirare veneno*
> *ora rear quantumque oculos effundere mortis!*
> *nec Pallas spectare potest, vultusque gelassent*
> *Perseos aversi, si non Tritonia densos*
> *sparsisset crines texissetque ora colubris.* (9.678-83)

[59] See the works cited in Chapter 5 n.82, as well as Papaioannou (2005), Lowe (2010) and Bexley (2010).

[60] Perhaps also a parody of Pompey's *umbra* as lodged inside Cato.

> What expression did the Gorgon have, her head cut off by the hooked steel's wound! How much venom do I suppose her mouth breathed, and how much death her eyes shed! Not even Pallas can watch, and Perseus' face would have frozen, even though turned away, if Tritonia had not scattered her thick hair and covered her face with snakes.

Even in death, Medusa's face retains its power.[61] The counterpart here is the Nile: like the river, Medusa's head releases liquid, but instead of life-giving water, it secretes only poison. *Effundere* also suggests the liquid undertone of her glance, as if her eyes were releasing poison also, and not just a petrifying gaze. At the moment of her death, then, Medusa overflows with death to others: this itself is a neat summary of how the Caesarian cycle works—causing destruction to others at the same time as shattering itself.

In fact, the miraculous birth of the Libyan snakes from Medusa's blood is very formulaic:

> *illa tamen sterilis tellus fecundaque nulli*
> *arva bono virus stillantis tabe Medusae*
> *concipiunt dirosque fero de sanguine rores,*
> *quos calor adiuvit putrique incoxit harenae*. (9.696-99)
>
> Yet that barren land and the fields fertile with no bounty absorb poison from the putrefaction of dripping Medusa and the frightful dew from her noxious blood, which the heat nourished and boiled in the crumbling sand.

The snakes are born from tiny pieces of her, and they take form as literal fragments of her head (which, of course, consists of snakes). The desert itself may be barren, but we should not forget that it is also the most Caesarian environment of all in its magical ability to endow regenerative capabilities to Marius and Antaeus. In this sinister

[61] In fact, Fantham (1992b) 107 shows that Lucan increases the power of Medusa's gaze at the moment of death from petrification only upon gazing at her head to petrification in its mere presence, which is why Perseus would have been turned to stone even *aversus*. Thus, the power is shifted from the victim's gaze to Medusa's (dead) gaze.

environment, Medusa's already poisonous blood is fully transformed into venom by the action of the Caesarian heat. This metamorphosis is not completely formulaic, of course: Medusa cannot be returned to life, but she lives on in her progeny, who are multiplying fragments of their mistress, just as the scourge of civil war shatters into smaller yet still individually deadly smithereens (Cato in Libya, Caesar in Egypt).

The thematic connections persist as the snakes emerge from this deadly concoction: *hic quae prima caput movit de pulvere tabes / aspida somniferam tumida cervice levavit* ("Here the gore that first moved its head from the sand raised the sleep-inducing asp with its swollen neck," 9.700-01). Even before it fully emerges as a snake, Medusa's blood rears its head like Marius' ghost at 1.582. Furthermore, Lucan marks its biology as formulaic: *plenior huc sanguis et crassi gutta veneni / decidit; in nulla plus est serpente coactum* ("here the blood and the drop of thick venom fall more fully; in no other snake is it more concentrated," 9.702-03). The poison is concentrated inside the asp's glands and is ready to be released; an alternative interpretation is that the snake was formed by the gathering of the most poison. Thus, the snake is Medusa reborn after her blood and venom have been scattered by death; they hide and coalesce into new life with the aid of the formulaic properties of Libya. Finally, Lucan takes care to point out its habitat: *Niloque tenus metitur harenas* ("and it traverses the sands up to the Nile," 9.705). The asp's antipathy to water[62] strengthens its Caesarian pedigree, and in the light of Caesar's contest with the Nile in the following book, this reference takes on added significance.

Likewise for the last serpent: *late sibi summovet omne / vulgus et in vacua regnat basiliscus harena* ("the basilisk dislodges the whole crowd from afar and reigns in the

[62] Plin. *NH* 8.86, quoted by Wick (2004) 2.287.

empty sand," 9.725-26). The imperious nature of this snake is Caesarian: it sweeps aside all other snakes and dominates the resulting vacuum just as Caesar flooded Italy and Rome with his presence. With this last example, we can be sure that Lucan's marking of the snakes as Caesarian is intentional, since he creates a ring composition out of these two snakes. However, the description of the *basiliscus* is somewhat unstable in that it uneasily reflects Cato's status in the desert as well, especially when one recalls the narrator's desert-triumph wish, that in effect Cato would "reign" supreme in the barren desert. Even in a "troop" catalogue of his soon-to-be nemeses, Lucan does not hesitate to insert just enough of a similarity to Cato to make the reader uncomfortable.

The Libyan Snakes: Caesarian Distortions

The snake episode has been a problem for many commentators, who have tended either to dismiss it or treat it negatively.[63] Cato's encounter with the snakes forces the reader of Lucan to confront a jarring collision between a self-proclaimed fount of Stoic virtue and, outside of Erictho, his most bizarre and disgusting creations.[64] Instead of the ideal *aristeia* that Cato has in mind in Book 2, he encounters almost the complete opposite: a "battle" waged by animals in which he serves as a mere spectator. Lucan sets the grisly scene by describing Cato as exactly this: *tot tristia fata suorum / insolitasque videns parvo cum vulnere mortes* ("seeing so many grim fates of his own men and

[63] E.g. Aumont (1968b) and Morford (1967) 125-28. Ahl (1976) 269-70 notes the mythical backdrop, but does not treat the scene in detail; Johnson (1987) 52 and Bartsch (1997) 29-31 remark on the reluctance of critics to deal with this episode, the latter pinpointing its mixture of gore and ridiculousness that prevent it from being taken seriously.

[64] For Lucan's sources, see Cazzaniga (1957) and Kebric (1976). Bartsch (1997) 29-35 sees the episode as a confrontation between Cato as the ultimate preserver of *modus* and the snakes as ultimate boundary-dissolvers, and more generally a contest between spirit and matter with the latter "victorious."

unusual deaths from a tiny wound," 9.735-36).[65] He thus puts Cato in the position of *securus*, of being aloof from the slaughter—a condition he so pointedly rejected in Book 2. It is also a further intrusion of a Caesarian attitude (through Sulla) that was hinted at in the *basiliscus* description. The parade of horrors begins with the attack of the *dipsas* upon the unsuspecting Aules. As expected from the name, the snake's venom drains moisture from the victim: *ebibit umorem circum vitalia fusum / pestis* ("the poison drinks up the moisture spread around the organs," 9.743-44). Poison beats water: that is, Caesarian fluid engulfs its aquatic "opponent"; *oculos lacrimarum vena refugit* ("the channel of tears fled his eyes," 9.746) shows Aules' water literally drawing back into his body (the opposite of overflow). Lucan's description of the poison and its effects also blurs the line between physical and emotional states: when he describes Aules as *ardentem* ("burning" 9.748) and *furens* ("raging" 9.749), the venom seems to be endowing its victim with Caesarian characteristics. These symptoms in turn seem to undo any training that Cato has imparted: *non decus imperii, non maesti iura Catonis / ardentem tenuere virum* ("neither the honor of supreme power nor the laws of sorrowful Cato restrained the burning man," 9.747-78).[66] Such Caesarian behavior is explained by the fact that, in effect, the venom possesses Aules and is controlling his body: *quas poscebat aquas sitiens in corde venenum* ("which waters the poison thirsting in his heart demanded," 9.750). In fact, it turns him so Caesarian that he could even drink the Nile: *ille…arderet Nilumque bibens per rura vagantem* ("he…would be burning, though drinking from the Nile that wanders through the countryside," 9.751-52). Of course, this

[65] Sklenář (2003) 97 notes the remarkable insignificance of Cato in this section.

[66] Leigh (1997) 270-72 establishes that the physical effects of the dipsad's bite is reminiscent of language that describes mental anguish, thus showing the failure of Cato's moral training.

is a ridiculous, parodic (not to mention deadly) thirst when set next to Caesar's. However, disaster is perhaps inevitable when non-Caesarian characters try to become Caesarian.

In a bathetic manner, Aules' desperate scrambling for water (*scrutatur venas penitus squalentis harenae*, "he deeply probes the veins of the arid sand," 9.755) is the lowly physical counterpart to Caesar's learned quest for the Nile's source: both desire to destroy layers of protection to get at the desired object. Finally, he resorts to a characteristic Lucanian paradox: he drinks his own blood (*ferroque aperire tumentis / sustinuit venas atque os implere cruore*, "and he endured to open his swollen veins and fill his mouth with blood," 9.759-60). With this, he turns from a would-be Caesar to just another nameless victim of civil war and one emblematic of its suicidal tendencies (cf. the state stabbing itself in the vitals at 1.3).[67]

Cato's response brings up the issue of viewing again: *iussit signa rapi propere Cato: discere nulli / permissum est hoc posse sitim* ("Cato ordered the standards to be carried off hastily: none was permitted to learn that thirst had this power," 9.761-62). By not allowing his men to observe Aules lest his condition be contagious, Cato acknowledges that what ails him is no less a moral affliction than a biological one; and just as Cato exhorts his men to observe his hardiness in order to gain this trait for themselves (9.394-98), so too he is now afraid that they might become like Aules simply by viewing him. As for the poor soldier, neither morality nor philosophy can overcome the terrible physical effects of the venom (just as no amount of Stoic training can overcome the instinctual forces of the formula).

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[67] Leigh (1997) 269.

The next to die is Sabellus. Once again, the destruction of one man's body stands in for that of the state in civil war, as his death follows upon the destruction of his belly's *compages*: *dissiluit stringens uterum membrana, fluuntque / viscera* ("the membrane binding his abdomen burst apart, and his guts pour out," 9.773-74; cf. also Lucan's vision of ἐκπύρωσις at 1.72-80). However, Lucan is also parodying the overflow model here (*fluunt*): Sabellus' vitals break through the barrier of their membrane, but the only result is death, not the unleashing of force. In addition, Lucan adds the bleak comment *quidquid homo est, aperit pestis natura profana* ("the venom's polluted nature discloses all that is man," 9.779). That is, the deaths of Sabellus and his comrades show that from an objective point of view, man is nothing more than the sum of his organs and tissues. This strikes at the very heart of Cato's mission, which is to grasp at what is purely insubstantial, such as *libertas*. A similar radical dichotomy was present at Pompey's death, in which, from Cornelia's point of view, he was nothing more than a butchered animal, while he was completely absorbed inside his own head.

The disgust quotient increases still more for the death of Nasidius by *prester*. Once again, the snake breaks boundaries (*tenditque cutem pereunte figura / miscens cuncta tumor*, "and the swelling, confounding everything, stretches his skin as his shape disappears," 9.793); however, Lucan parodies another of his motifs here. As the poison spreads and inflates the man like a balloon, it takes over the body just as in the case of Aules, but with far more grotesque results:

> *toto iam corpore maior*
> *humanumque egressa modum super omnia membra*
> *efflatur sanies late pollente veneno;*
> *ipse latet penitus congesto corpore mersus,*
> *nec lorica tenet distenti pectoris auctum.* (9.793-97)

> And now, greater than his entire body and surpassing mortal limits, the pus exudes over all his limbs as the poison has wide influence: the man himself is deeply hidden, sunk by his mass of a body, nor does his cuirass contain the growth of his swollen chest.

These lines take Ovidian identity confusion to the limit: there is no distinction between Nasidius and the *sanies*, as the latter is the one that has possessed his body and is now driving its expansion. Just as the poison makes a mockery out of the soldier's body, so Lucan similarly twists his own themes: *egressa modum* is a grotesque variant of his preoccupation elsewhere with the limits and dangers of growth, especially that of the Nile (10.331).[68] Instead of healthful growth, the venom promotes its opposite. On the other hand, such deadly swelling is more like the effect of Caesar's overflow and flooding as seen in the first three books. In addition, Nasidius' disappearing inside himself (note the contrast between *ipse* and *corpore*) is a grotesque variation on the core motif, for the real human is hidden underneath a poisoned mass. Of course, the difference here is that this core has nothing to do with the surrounding growth, and is even being annihilated by it. By the time Lucan rounds out his description with *tumidos iam non capit artus / informis globus et confuso pondere truncus* ("no longer can the shapeless blob and torso of jumbled weight contain its swelling limbs," 9.800-01), the formulaic verb *capit* reveals what has been implicit in the passage—namely that Nasidius is a realization of Lucan's image of overflowing civil war at 6.63. He is, simply put, the personification of the unstoppable growth of both civil war and Caesarian influence. And as in the case of Sabellus (but for the opposite reason), Nasidius will have no tomb: *nondum stante modo crescens fugere cadaver* ("and they fled the growing corpse, its limit not yet fixed,"

[68] Leigh (1997) 273 n.102 also sees a moral subtext to the effects of the *prester*'s venom, namely the swelling of anger. Such a correlation is appropriate here due to the Caesarian formula's reliance on *furor*.

9.804). The destruction of an integrated self that had already begun at 9.800-01 (the *globus* and *truncus* are no longer part of Nasidius, but an amalgam of his body and the swelling venom) is now complete: even after Nasidius' death, "he" keeps growing. This growth, however, is a mockery of life's natural increase because of its refusal to stay within the bounds of nature. There is also a political analogy here: just as the poison continues to grow despite the death of its human host, so Caesarian influence floods over Rome and its empire, bringing about the death of the republic in the process yet still spreading to the ends of the world.

By now, it should be clear that these ridiculous "battles" are a sort of satirical carnival that mocks not only Cato's earlier pretensions, but also the poet's own themes of growth. Lucan acknowledges the grotesque pleasure of these deaths: *sed maiora parant Libycae spectacula pestes* ("but the Libyan plagues prepare greater spectacles," 9.805). These deaths serve to shock his readers (and to some of them at least, give even a sort of macabre enjoyment).[69] Furthermore, they also throw back the idea of viewing onto Cato: where earlier he wished to serve as an *exemplum* to his men so that they might learn *virtus* by gazing upon his own self-imposed hardships, now both he and his men have no choice but to become passive spectators of these horrors. In effect, Cato is unwittingly placed into a similar position as Sulla in Book 2: looking from afar at the deaths of other men. Lucan had described the latter as *securus ab alto / spectator sceleris* ("free of concern, a viewer of the crime from on high," 2.207-08). While the circumstances between the two and the deaths which they view could not be more different, the above phrase captures Cato's role here as well. In this light, Cato's epithet of *securus* at 9.410 takes on a darker tone, and even his attitude of serenity expressed in Book 2 by the phrase

[69] The latter view is best expressed by Johnson (1987) 56-57 and Bartsch (1997) 29.

securum sui ("unconcerned for himself," 2.241) cannot help but be tarnished by his attitude here.[70] We thus have in the soldiers' deaths a pageant of formulaic mockery which their leader observes, who himself has fallen into a quasi-autocratic mode of viewing while also exhibiting brief but telling attempts to become formulaic. Although the snakes and the effects of their poison are the antitheses to everything that Cato represents, they are united in one crucial aspect: both enact broken, useless parodies of the formula. The latter possesses Caesarian traits that ultimately get him and his army nowhere because he is fundamentally barren (whatever else one might say about Caesar's effect on his environment, he is nothing if not a living dynamo), while the former endow their victims' bodies with formulaic tendencies that cause them to self-destruct without providing any benefit: even the Caesarian lion could lunge at his foe before dying gloriously. In the world of the desert, the formula is warped beyond recognition.

After the virtuoso performances we have seen thus far, Lucan rushes through the remaining snakes. Tullus, who is bitten by the *haemorrhois*, promptly pours out blood through all his orifices: he becomes the metaphor of blood at 6.61-63 on the point of overflow (*totum est pro vulnere corpus*, "his entire body is a wound," 9.814). Only the last serpent, the *basiliscus*, is significant: as it came last in the catalogue, so it also closes out the episode. Whereas the placement in the catalogue suggested a sort of culmination, as though to save the "commander" of the snakes for last, being last here offers a ray of hope after the horrors to which Cato and his army have been subjected. This is because, ironically, the most Caesarian of the snakes (in terms of its regal status) is the only one that fails to kill its victim and is presumably even killed itself (*quid prodest miseri*

[70] Sklenář (2003) 61-63 notes that such *securitas* displayed by Cato in Book 2 is equivalent to Stoic ἀταραξία, though the first part of the phrase, *cunctisque timentem* ("and fearful for everyone") indicates his commitment to Rome at the cost of complete serenity: see Fantham (1992a) 125.

basiliscus cuspide Murri / transactus? "what good is it that the basilisk is pierced by wretched Murrus' spear-point?" 9.828-29). Yet the snake manages to leave a nasty surprise for Murrus:

> *velox currit per tela venenum*
> *invaditque manum; quam protinus ille retecto*
> *ense ferit totoque semel demittit ab armo,*
> *exemplarque sui spectans miserabile leti*
> *stat tutus pereunte manu.* (9.829-33)
>
> The poison runs quickly through the missile and attacks his hand; he immediately unsheathes his sword and in one stroke severs it entirely from his shoulder, and watching this miserable model of his own death, he stands safely as his hand perishes.

First of all, Murrus has just killed this most Caesarian of snakes. In a jarring contrast to the parodic gruesomeness of the rest of the episode, the snake section ends on a note of fantasy as strong as that of Pompey's bull simile in Book 2. After dispatching the *basiliscus*, this ersatz Brutus has enough presence of mind to chop off his own hand, after which he adopts a detached pose, gazing from on high the hand as substitute for his own body. The mere fact that he survives is already a tremendous improvement over the previous snake encounters, and the severing of his own hand shows a truly impressive endurance that may be described as Stoic: Murrus exhibits the *patientia* that Cato describes of himself at 9.394-98.[71] At last, it seems that Cato's training has borne fruit in the behavior of this soldier. Yet what does he learn from this *exemplar*, if anything? Murrus actually takes on the role of Cato here, gazing upon his dying hand just as the Stoic general could only watch helplessly as his men were dispatched by the snakes.

[71] Morford (1967) 128 sees an echo of the republican hero Mucius Scaevola, who also watched his right hand wither away.

However, without further comment, we are left only with *aporia*.[72] *Exemplar sui leti* suggests that he does learn what it means to be mortal by watching a piece of himself die, but on the other hand this is the poet's own interpretation of the act; Lucan does not depict Murrus as having any sort of reaction at all. In the absence of clarity, the shadow of Caesarian viewing (as exemplified by Sulla in Book 2) can always potentially creep in.

Aftermath: The True Heroes of the Desert

After this prolonged assault by the snakes, Lucan finally gives the battered army an opportunity to retaliate, and at an interestingly opportune time:

> *...calidoque vapore*
> *alliciunt gelidas nocturno frigore pestes,*
> *innocuosque diu rictus torpente veneno*
> *inter membra fovent.* (9.843-46)
>
> …and with their warmth they entice the noxious animals, cold with nighttime chill, and they nurture among their limbs these jaws, for a long time harmless, their venom sluggish.

The nighttime chill renders the venom less effective; Caesarian heat is dulled by the cold, even though the snakes continue biting them. In formulaic terms, the venom is dormant, which allows the men a brief respite to take stock of their situation.

During this respite, the army also has a chance to speak out about their predicament. When they do so, they give voice to a sentiment that is by now clear, that the desert is merely another arena of the civil war: *pro Caesare pugnant / dipsades et peragunt civilia bella cerastae*, ("The dipsads and *cerastae* fight civil war on behalf of

[72] Leigh (1997) 279-81 notes the fundamental unease of this passage, since Murrus both exhibits Stoic endurance in severing his own hand as well as the detachment of the spectator in watching it die at a safe distance. Bexley (2010) 146 and 146 n.46 argues against Leigh, seeing Murrus' detached viewing as imitating Cato's and thus justifying it.

Caesar," 9.850-51). However, they quickly absolve the desert itself of blame: *nil, Africa, de te / nec de te, natura, queror*, "Africa, I complain of nothing against you, nor against you, nature," 9.854-55. Perhaps they have learned something from Cato after all—to endure death gladly in this most hostile of environments. Indeed, they place the blame for their own misfortunes squarely on themselves:

> *in loca serpentum nos venimus: accipe poenas*
> *tu, quisquis superum commercia nostra perosus*
> *hinc torrente plaga, dubiis hinc Syrtibus orbem*
> *abrumpens medio posuisti limite mortes*.
> *per secreta tui bellum civile recessus*
> *vadit, et arcani miles tibi conscius orbis*
> *claustra ferit mundi.* (9.859-65)
>
> We have come into the serpents' environment: exact the punishment, whichever of the gods you are who, loathing communication with us, detaching a region on one side with a torrid zone, on the other side with the ambiguous Syrtes, placed death in the middle boundary. Civil war travels through the recesses of your retreat, and the soldier, privy with you to this obscure region, strikes at the world's barriers.

In contrast to Cato, who viewed the desert as an ideal training-ground for *virtus* and love of *libertas*, his men bring spatial concerns back into the foreground. Libya was meant to be set apart from the rest of the world, to have no communication with it. Thus, in a sense they are the ones doing wrong by violating its boundaries: these outer regions are not meant to be shared with man, as shown by the *pestes* they encounter on their way. This attitude toward *recessus* stands in ambiguous relationship with how Pompey viewed them. Early in the epic, he treated the east as a reserve of power and embodied by its rivers; however, in Book 8, Pompey spoke of it in more Caesarian language, referring to it as a realm to be penetrated (8.216) or a boundary to be crossed (8.290-91), just as

Cato's men do here (*claustra*).[73] The passivity of *fuga* as escape *from* again shades imperceptibly into escape *to* a goal. However, this time there is no physical destination in sight. This is in keeping with Cato's emphasis over the journey and not the destination, but it results in the soldiers going past even Africa until they believe they are on the opposite side of the world (9.876-78).

Thus Cato's journey ends up being the worst of both Pompeian and Caesarian worlds: he keeps fleeing into oblivion, but with active intent. In transgressing the boundaries of the known world, they unwittingly mimic the various Nile expeditions that Acoreus lists as having failed (10.268ff). At least the various despots had a goal, though: the soldiers have gone so far that they start to imagine strange events: *coeunt ignes stridentibus undis / et premitur natura poli* ("fires unite with hissing waters, and the sky is weighted down," 9.866-67). This language is reminiscent of primeval chaos or ἐκπύρωσις, of some strange unity of the elements (*coeunt* recalling *coegerit* at 1.73). But if colliding elements are symbolic of civil war, then Cato is merely directing his army deeper into it, just as he did with the snakes. Without a tangible goal, the men can only conclude by hoping that at least the desert will do as much harm to Caesar as it has done to them (a vain hope, of course): *veniant hostes, Caesarque sequatur / qua fugimus* ("let the enemy come, and let Caesar follow where we flee," 9.879-80).

However, Lucan describes the speech in a way that undermines it: *sic dura suos patientia questus / exonerat* ("thus hardy endurance unburdens its own complaints," 9.880-81). Apparently, this was a way for Cato's men to blow off steam in the midst of their training, which is apparently now taking effect. While it does not wholly invalidate

[73] Hershkowitz (1998) 245 sees such boundary transgression as openly Caesarian, though in my view it is complicated by its simultaneous status as *fuga*.

the content of the speech, such a comment suggests that at least they were exaggerating somewhat about the extent of their penetration. Interestingly, only after the snake episode does Lucan describe the effect that Cato's leadership has upon his men:

> *cogit tantos tolerare labores*
> *summa ducis virtus, qui nuda fusus harena*
> *excubat atque omni Fortunam provocat hora.* (9.881-83)
>
> They are forced to endure such labor by their leader's highest virtue, who keeps watch spread out on the bare sand and challenges Fortune at every hour.

In this light, both the snake episode and the soldiers' complaint can be seen as phases through which the men must pass before reaching a degree of training. Just as he promised at the beginning of the journey, Cato provides himself as an *exemplum* of hardy self-deprivation by lying on the bare sand; however, his position here is also uncomfortably close to what Antaeus did when he was worn out during the contest with Hercules.[74] Once again, Lucan leaves Cato's relationship to the desert unclear: is he resisting the desert or drawing strength from it? If the latter, it is only a useless mimicking of the formula, for of course Cato cannot actually draw strength from African soil. Yet this is not Cato's only Caesarian act: *omnibus unus adest fatis: quocumque vocatus / advolat* ("he, one man, is present at every death; he rushes to any place he is called," 9.884-85) is reminiscent of Caesar's omnipresence at Pharsalus (7.557-67) and during the siege at Alexandria (10.488-91).[75] Even this connection is revealing of Cato's impotence, however: unlike Caesar's virtuoso display of leadership at the height of his

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[74] Leigh (1997) 274 sees strong hints of the arena in Lucan's description of Cato here, especially in *fusus* and *provocat*. While gladiatorial imagery is prevalent in Seneca to describe the *sapiens* (see *De Tranq.* 11.1-6), the simultaneous reminiscence to Antaeus pushes it away from Stoicism, or at least creates a disturbing mixture of Stoic and formulaic behavior.

[75] Hershkowitz (1998) 244.

prowess, Cato can only display such dominance at a moment of general suffering, once again rendering his mimicking of Caesarian behavior meaningless in terms of physical survival. Finally, Lucan describes Cato as teaching endurance through observation: *spectatorque docet magnos nil posse dolores* ("and as a viewer he instructs them that great suffering has no power," 9.889). He is doing essentially the same thing as he was in the snake episode, but here it actually has an effect (*docet*). Yet how quickly Cato changes roles from being a would-be formulaic fighter into merely a spectator:[76] evidently, he is unable to maintain that quasi-formulaic position of lines 9.881-83, thus confirming its status as an empty gesture devoid of true significance. In switching his stance, however, the shadow of Sullan spectatorship looms once again behind his Stoic instructor's stance, not to mention that this is the opposite stance that Cato envisioned for himself in Book 2. Instead of being the center of attention and wounds on the battlefield, Cato can only be an observer and not a true *exemplum*.[77] The final image of Cato in the epic is thus that of a noble failure, whose Stoic training is just starting to bear fruit, but who at the same time tries formulaic gestures without meaning. His real means of resistance, as expressed by the Stoic Jupiter, is wholly spiritual.

Although Lucan provides a glimpse of hope that the survivors of the desert trek are finally benefiting from Cato's regimen, they are nevertheless on their last legs: *vix miseris serum tanto lassata periclo / auxilium Fortuna dedit* ("Fortune, exhausted by such great danger, reluctantly gave late assistance to the wretched," 9.890-91). It turns

[76] Leigh (1997) 275 notices this abrupt shift.

[77] Bexley (2010) 144-45 attempts to rehabilitate Cato's behavior in this scene by citing Sen. *Ep*. 11.8 and 78.21 to show that he is the model of a Senecan *testis*. While this may be true, we cannot be sure whether the soldiers see it this way, or whether they hold their groaning (9.886-87) out of shame in Cato's presence. Moreover, however they die, they still die.

out that the army's true savior is not their commander, but the Psylli, the only tribe in this area that is immune to snake venom (9.891-92). Unlike Cato's men, they need no moral exhortation or philosophical training to withstand the poison, but are resistant by nature: *par lingua potentibus herbis, / ipse cruor tutus nullumque admittere virus / vel cantu cessante potens* ("their tongues were equal to potent herbs, their very blood was safe and was powerful enough to admit no venom, even in the absence of spell-casting," 9.893-95). They even test newborns to see whether they can endure the presence of snakes, rejecting those who cannot (9.906-07); this gives them a hint of Hercules, which is thematically relevant given his victory in the desert over Antaeus.[78] Lucan even describes them in this way—*contraque nocentia monstra / Psyllus adest populis* ("the Psylli are of help to the nations against deadly monsters," 9.910-11)—thus granting them an additional Herculean trait. Instead of Cato following in the footsteps of this hero, the Psylli outdo him by being natural saviors of mankind.[79] *Adest* in this sense is also used of the Nile at 10.233 and 10.235, thus placing the Psylli in the category of purely natural, anti-Caesarian resistance. Only they are capable of combating the venom on its own terms: *nam primum tacta designat membra saliva, / quae cohibet virus retinetque in vulnere pestem* ("for he first marks out the limbs by contact with saliva, which constrains the virus and binds the plague in the wound," 9.925-26). Instead of the poison engulfing

[78] Lucan also compares the training of their children against venom to eagles who test the ability of their chicks to withstand direct sunlight (*qui potuere pati radios et lumine recto / sustinuere diem, caeli servantur in usus*, "those who could suffer the sun's rays and endure daylight with direct gaze are kept for heaven's use," 9.904-05). Given the relationship of the sun to Caesarian power and the overwhelming dominance of the sun in the desert, the simile strengthens the anti-Caesarian status of the Psylli and in passing, further diminishes Cato's effectiveness in this role.

[79] For Lucan's Cato and Hercules, see Shoaf (1978), D'Alessandro Behr (2007) 125, and Ahl (1976) 271-72, who sees Cato as superior. For the opposite conclusion, see Leigh (2000) 108 and Papaioannou (2005) 224-25. Malamud (2003) 39 cautions against drawing too rigid a connection. For Hercules as a Stoic *exemplum*, see Galinsky (1972) 147-48.

their moisture (as it did with Aules, for example), their saliva can constrain it, thus preventing its deadly spreading throughout the body so that it can be banished by means of incantations. For once, water actually succeeds in acting as a barrier to Caesarian force. Thus healed, Cato and his men finally make it out of the deepest desert and back onto solid ground (9.942-43).

In the end, it is not Cato's moral exhortations that preserve his army in the desert, but the cultural and biological resources of a native tribe. Lucan thus suggests that survival against Caesar, and perhaps even regeneration, does not lie with this sage, no matter how vehemently the narrator exhorts otherwise. Instead, one must look to nature, especially the element of water (or at least water stronger than that which Caesar has encountered so far). In its own small way, then, the Psylli episode points to the Nile's ultimate victory over Caesar.

Conclusion: The Formula beyond Lucan?

Concluding a discussion about the concept of the formula on Cato seems to be an anticlimax: in spite of his sincere Stoic exhortations to his men, the army ends up making it out of the desert alive only thanks to the good graces of the Psylli, who exhibit a natural immunity to the venom of the Caesarian snakes. The power of nature over training thus leads us inevitably back to the central chapter on water and Caesar's rebuff by Acoreus. This "defeat," if one can call it as such, is a prelude to Caesar's physical near-defeat at the end of the epic. Like Cato, Acoreus tries bridging the gap between Pompey and Caesar by utilizing both *fuga* and formula. However, the Egyptian actually succeeds: the Nile outdoes Pompey at his own game in the eternal receding of its *caput*, while Acoreus' description of a flood that grows *sine fine* outdoes what even Caesar can do within the limits of the formula. In a poem where everything buckles and collapses because of Caesar (and even he almost totters at its conclusion), the only entity that thrives and that helps others to thrive seems to be the Nile as representative and guardian of beneficial nature.

In connection with nature, the formula, especially in its specifically Caesarian overflowing/flooding variant, is indebted to natural processes, as was suggested in the introductory chapter. I would like here to suggest ways in which future work may be pursued in this direction. Now merely viewing Caesar and his actions in terms of the formula is a first step, since one is accustomed to discussing his behavior in psychological terms as a sort of *amor mortis*, or in terms of hidden, inscrutable forces such as *fortuna*. As I have tried to show, however, Lucan endows his Caesar with a

periodicity that allows him to rebound from disaster time and again. Framing Caesar in these terms is part of Lucan's strategy of what might tentatively be called "dehumanization," which is part of his overall denaturing of epic norms. The stripping away of such norms is most pronounced in his grisly battle scenes. Not only do they reach heights of gore so as to be almost self-parody, as in the snake episode, but such overdoing of bloodshed has a numbing effect because Lucan's poetic skill is focused on the variety of wounding and effects of bloodshed rather than on eliciting pathos.[1] The individual, human identity of the combatant or victim is thus obscured in favor of the violent act itself: for example, Vanessa Gorman observes that Lucan "conceives of the battlefield, not in terms of victor and victim, but in terms of weapon and wound."[2] Lucan's penchant for the inversion of subject-object relations leading to a personification of weapons is merely a heightening of this general tendency.[3]

As a consequence, acts of violence in Lucan seem to be drained of agency and behave almost as spontaneous, mindless acts of nature. For example, the piling on of Sulla's victims upon each other is described in terms almost as impersonal as that of a landslide: *sed illos / magna premit strages peraguntque cadavera partem / caedis: viva graves elidunt corpora trunci* ("but great carnage compresses them, and the corpses accomplish a portion of the slaughter: the heavy torsos crush living bodies", 2.204-06). That *trunci* can mean both "torso/body" (*OLD* 1) and "tree trunk" (*OLD* 2) further contributes to the dehumanization of the corpses, as if they were merely timber or *materia*.

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[1] Bartsch (1997) 19-22 uses Kristeva's term "abject" to conceptualize the extent to which violence in Lucan ends up destroying a sense of self. For extreme violence in Neronian literature generally, see Most (1992).

[2] Gorman (2001) 271.

[3] See Henderson (1987) 140 and Bartsch (1997) 22-24.

The greatest victim of civil war, Pompey, also undergoes a subtle, long-range transformation. Over the course of the civil war, he goes from trying to harness rivers indirectly to becoming an *umbra* that overflows like a river, and finally to having his *caput* symbolically subsumed into the Nile's. Ovid's influence on Lucan has been acknowledged, though a detailed study is still needed, and I suggest that the metamorphosis that Pompey undergoes in the epic is a part of the Ovidian legacy.[4] As for Caesar, it was suggested in Chapter 1 that the cyclical nature of the formula bears a strong resemblance to the Stoic theory of a cyclical universe that self-destructs and then re-integrates itself again.

Additional investigation into the influence of Stoic views of nature on the formula should proceed from Seneca, chiefly of course from the *Naturales quaestiones*, but also from the rest of his prose works. The tragedies should also be central to a consideration of the formula because they are packed with overreaching protagonists who let their *ira* swell to cosmic proportions in preparing their monstrous deeds: Hercules in *HF* (as noted in Chapter 1) is perhaps the Senecan character that most nearly mirrors formulaic behavior, but there are others. Both Atreus and Medea, for example, begin their respective dramas in a state of low energy and gradually work themselves up into a frenzied state. The former complains that he is *ignave, iners, enervis* ("lazy, idle, languid," *Thy.* 176) at the beginning of the play and goads himself into such a rage that he is compared to a lion that keeps killing even after his hunger is satisfied: *pulsa fame / non ponit iras* ("his hunger banished, he does not cease his anger," *Thy*. 734-35; earlier examples of his swelling rage are at *Thy.* 260ff). There is a hint of the formula in this passage as well: *dente iam lasso impiger* ("not sluggish though his jaws are now weary,"

[4] See Tarrant (2002) and Wheeler (2002), especially the latter's citations at 366 n.16.

Thy. 736). Here we are faced with an interesting separation between emotional and physical states, however: the lion's body instinctively tires in a cyclical fashion even though its mind still rages. Such disjunction encourages further study into how Seneca utilizes the formula in a different fashion from his nephew. In addition, in this example we see that Seneca also shares with Lucan a literary sleight of hand: there is a mismatch between simile and subject reminiscent of that between Lucan's thunderbolt simile and his character sketch of Caesar. As for Medea, she likewise starts from a relative lack of energy (*si vivis, anime, si quid antiqui tibi / remanet vigoris*, "if you live, my spirit, if any of your ancient energy remains," *Med.* 41-42). One need only quote her curt self-command *rumpe iam segnes moras* ("now burst the sluggish delays," *Med.* 54) to realize that she is Caesar's spiritual kin. She continues to work up her rage: *numquam meus cessabit in poenas furor, / crescetque semper* ("never shall my fury tire in punishment, and it shall always increase," *Med.* 405-06; cf. also 411-14) until she achieves self-realization: *Medea nunc sum: crevit ingenium malis* ("I am now Medea: my nature has grown from evil," *Med.* 910). Her *ingenium*, that is, her *animus*, has literally swollen with her increased *furor* in an amalgam of mental, emotional, and physical growth.

Given the inability of dating Seneca's dramas with any degree of precision, the extent to which Lucan was influenced by his uncle's quasi-formulaic explorations (or even vice versa) will always remain unclear.[5] For cyclical behavior in post-Lucan literature, influence is of course more securely assumed. Hershkowitz already provides a solid introduction of Statius' preoccupation with an "entropic" pattern of energy (as summarized in the first chapter): the formula having been established in Lucan, a thorough study of Seneca's influence on Lucan and a comparison of cyclical and linear

[5] For an attempt at assigning dates to the tragedies, see Fitch (1981).

models naturally suggests itself. The other Flavian poets, Valerius Flaccus and Silius Italicus, may also benefit from research in this direction: for example, the latter's portrait of Hannibal is basically all but Caesarian: *impatiensque morae* ("and impatient of delay," *Punica* 8.4; note also his portrayal on his own shield at 2.451 as breaking the truce by crossing the Ebro, a situation reminiscent of Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon). A sort of grand formulaic arc may also be seen in Silius' conception of Cannae in the Second Punic War: as he says in his proem, *sed medio finem bello excidiumque vicissim / molitae gentes, propiusque fuere periclo, / quis superare datum* ("but the nations labored at each other's end and destruction in the middle war, and those to whom it was given to win were nearer to danger," *Punica* 1.12-14). If *medio* may be taken not just to mean the war itself (since it was the second of the three wars), but also the middle of the war (*medius OLD* 2), then it would refer to Cannae. And since Silius covers Cannae in the middle of the epic (Books 8-10), then structural factors come into play as well, just as Caesar is at his weakest in Books 5 and 10 of the *BC*. Moreover, *propiusque…datum* traces this arc in terms of Rome's fortunes or "energy" in its rising from the depths to the heights.[6]

These are just a few examples of texts in which the idea of cyclical growth and decline of energy may be observed. If more secure conclusions can be reached in this area, then Lucan would be further solidified in his reputation as one of the most innovative authors in Roman literature. Considering the breakneck pace at which he wrote and the extreme precocity of his talent, the production of his epic may rightly be regarded as a natural phenomenon in itself.

[6] However, Silius sees Cannae as the height of Roman morality (*Punica* 10.657-68): the inverse relationship between morals and prosperity, though reminiscent of Sallust, may also be worth looking into in terms of the formula.

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